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May 1990 GOREZONE # 13

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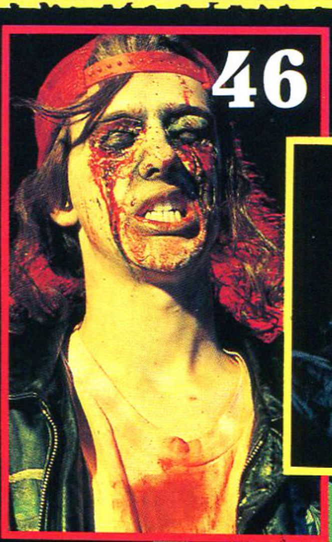

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BLOOD FEST

Eating the '80s

***Tremors*: One of the first genre movies of the '90s is a shameless throwback to the '50s. Go figure.**

Photo: Peter Iovino/Copyright 1990 Universal City Studios

By now, you're probably just recovering from all those "Best of the Decade" lists that the media began bombarding us with as the '80s drew to a close. Here at GOREZONE, the '90s are only a week old as I write this editorial, and although I've also had my fill of those silly page-fillers, I can't resist commenting on some of the trends we've seen in the last 10 years.

The decade began on a high note and ended on a low one. The high note started with the release of Sean Cunningham's *Friday the 13th* in 1980. *Friday*'s enormous success opened the splatter floodgates. Every studio in Hollywood and independent producer with the least bit of clout jumped on the slasher bandwagon, burning out the genre in little time at all with rip-offs, sequels and television spin-offs. Horror filmmakers went after brand names and franchises (Jason, Freddy, Michael, *The Howling*, *Poltergeist*, etc.) to sell their product.

The genre's next big boost came with the increasing popularity of video in the early '80s. Practically overnight, a whole new market for the horror industry sprang up. Unlike film distribution companies, which became more selective about which product to release as the decade wore on due to the high cost of marketing, enterprising filmmakers found that you could release just about anything on video and laugh all the way to the bank. Many independents bypassed theatrical distribution and went right to the living room, giving birth to the direct-to-video phenomenon. The shelves at local video stores were overflowing with terror titles, many unrated. Unlike theatrical releases that began losing their power with a crusading MPAA on their tails, video became the last holdout for unrated, uncensored splatter. Now that may change, too, since self-righteous political groups have targeted video as the latest scapegoat of society's evils.

During the '80s, we saw the rise and fall of the independent studios. Dedicated horror suppliers New World (*House*, *Hellraiser*, *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*, etc.), Cannon (*Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2*), Spectrafilm (*Blue Monkey*), Embassy (*Scanners*, *The Howling*), Atlantic (*Nomads*, *The Borrower*), De Laurentiis Entertainment Group (*Evil Dead II*, *Blue Velvet*, *Pumpkinhead*, etc.), Vestron (*Waxwork*, *Sundown*, *Parents*, *The Unholy*, etc.) and genre supermarket Empire Pictures (*Re-Animator*, etc., etc., etc.) went bankrupt or were swallowed up by larger studios. Companies like Empire tried to do too much with too little; others overspent, and still others just consistently produced lousy movies. New Line Cinema remains the only indie still standing tall, thanks to the success of Freddy Krueger. The marketplace will be even riskier for gutsy genre offerings in the '90s trying to find theatrical venues. Even quality '80s leftovers like *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*, *Luther the Geek* and *Night Life* are still having difficulty finding their way into theaters. This is peculiar, since there's certainly no shortage of movie screens. Every mall and city in the country has a supermultiplex crying for product.

The '80s' studio efforts, for the most part, turned out to be watered-down, embarrassing affairs. *Ghost Story*, *Firestarter*, *Leviathan*, *The Hunger*, *The Bride*, *The Island* and *The Keep* came and went faster than Bruce Willis' musical career. And everyone made sequels to even the most marginally successful flicks.

But the '80s weren't all that bad. Several films renewed our faith in the genre. My personal favorites, in no particular order, include *Aliens*, *Wolfen*, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, *Re-Animator*, *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*, *The Fly*, *The Fourth Man*, *Hellraiser* and its sequel, *The Stepfather*, *Dead Ringers*, *Blue Velvet*, *The Road Warrior*, *Beetlejuice*, *Near Dark*, *Monkey Shines*, *Angel Heart*, *The Blob*, *Demons* and *Brain Damage*.

Horror films face a lot of challenges in the decade ahead, especially an uncertain marketplace and the censorious grip of the MPAA. Don't expect the genre and its filmmakers—or GOREZONE and FANGORIA—to fight these battles lying down.

—Anthony Timpone,
Editor

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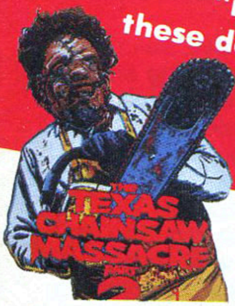
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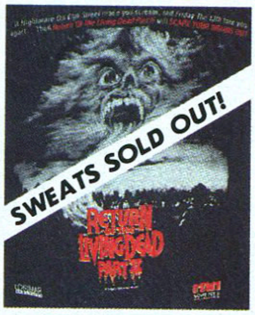
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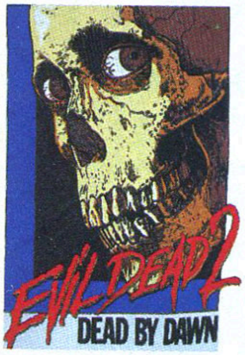
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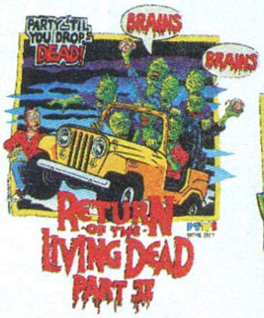
EVIL DEAD 2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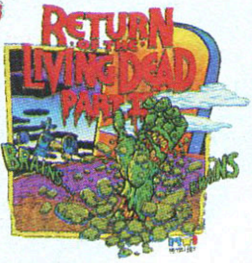
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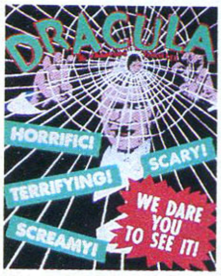
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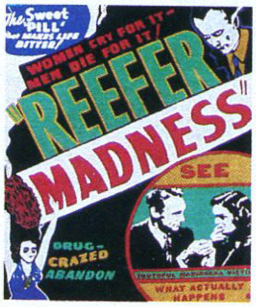
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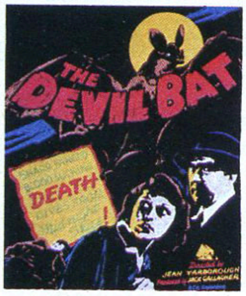
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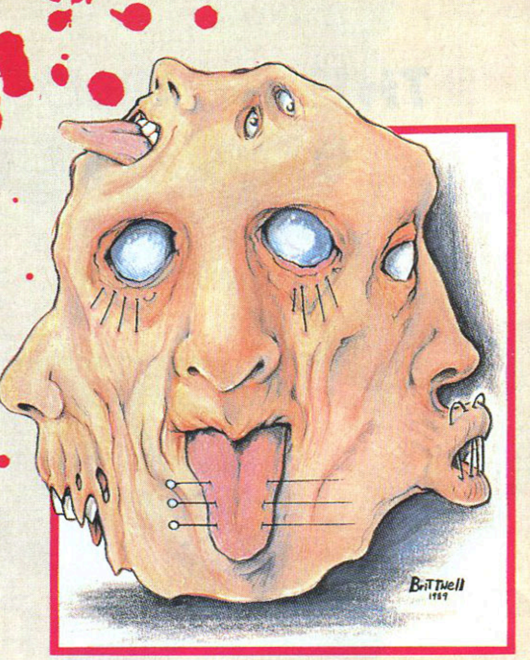
GUT reactions



Art: Brittnell Anderson

Art: Sigismund Koster

BALUN CHALLENGED!

...I was lying on my bed, watching television. I flipped the channel and heard something about video horror next on *20/20*. Naturally, I grabbed a tape and threw it onto my VCR. Then I got pushed too far. Instead of being a positive show on horror, it was the same old crap: "It's too violent." Well, after hearing about the troubles for the GOREZONE #6 cover and about *Nightmare 5*'s almost getting an X and the MPAA's doing some of their own slaughtering, it all got to the point where I got pissed off. I decided to write to you and get ahold of all the gorehounds out there.

We, the people who keep great magazines such as GOREZONE and FANGORIA on the magazine stands and in our mailboxes, have to act—*now*, before our beloved genre is wiped out by all those *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* losers out there! I hate to say this, but they even interviewed Chas. "Two-Face" Balun, the one guy I never thought would be on a show against horror. He also called us gore fans impatient. Like he's not? The guy who brought us "The World's Most Disgusting Slideshow" at the *Weekend of Horrors*?

I am begging for your letters to start some kind of group to get the word out that horror is more than just gore. I need more than 100 letters before I can start anything going, so please take a few minutes to save our genre. Write to me. In your letter, state what you think would be the best way to get a positive message across to all those who look at horror in the wrong manner.

Chad Armstrong
3403 Hackett
Long Beach, CA 90808

Huh? You call Balun two-faced for appearing on a TV show? Listen, when these network people interview you, they tape you for three hours, then edit you down to your worst 15 seconds. You can offer all the rational arguments you want, they're still gonna give the upper hand to some charlatan "psychologist." That's what sells commercial time, chum.

WELDON WHIPPED!

...I just saw *Waxwork*. What a waste! I expected to see bucketloads of blood and an equal amount of vomit-inducing gore. I'm sorry to say that this movie is about as vomit-inducing as a basket of kittens. After I read Michael Weldon's review in GOREZONE #4, I knew *Waxwork* wouldn't be the greatest horror movie in the world, but I did expect it to be a blood and guts record-breaker. I enthusiastically watched the vampire segment with high hopes that it would be "the goriest segment I've ever seen," but it was actually the dopiest segment I've ever seen.

Either I blinked too much and missed half of the scene, or Weldon needs to get out more and see some real gore. All in all, *Waxwork* is a soft, lame, half-ass piece of crap from beginning to end. I guess you really shouldn't believe everything you read.

Jason Wilde
Scott City, MO

Are you sure you didn't see the R-rated version?

TIMPONE TAUNTED!

...Anthony Timpone's editorial in GOREZONE #11 not only seemed unfair but bordered on hypocritical.

He makes no bones about stating his contempt for *Friday the 13th, Part VIII* and *Nightmare on Elm Street 5*, yet he was more than happy to take advantage of invitations to the sets of both movies and to capitalize on them with tantalizing advance coverage. This was very reminiscent of Chas. Balun's backstabbing of John Buechler in his ultra-depressing "Year of the Wimp" diatribe from GOREZONE #8, after Buechler had entertained him on the *Friday VII* set.

But the real problem with Timpone's piece was his false assumption that *everyone* is tired of sequels, which he bases on the lesser box office response to these two films. Remember that *Friday VIII* and *Nightmare 5* both came out during an unusually competitive season, what with *Batman*, *Indiana Jones* and so on.

As I stated in a letter which appeared in FANGORIA #61, sequels provide a continuing story, something that many people enjoy. Anyone who's tired of sequels can always go see something else. It's ridiculous to make the fans do without just to cater to the wishes of others.

The *Friday* and *Nightmare* series, because of their mainstream appeal, have always been the scapegoats of the horror genre, garnering merciless bashing from the likes of Siskel and Ebert and the rest of their ilk. I hate to see GOREZONE and FANGORIA sink to their level, especially after giving these movies so many years of support.

Petch Lucas
Hagerstown, MD

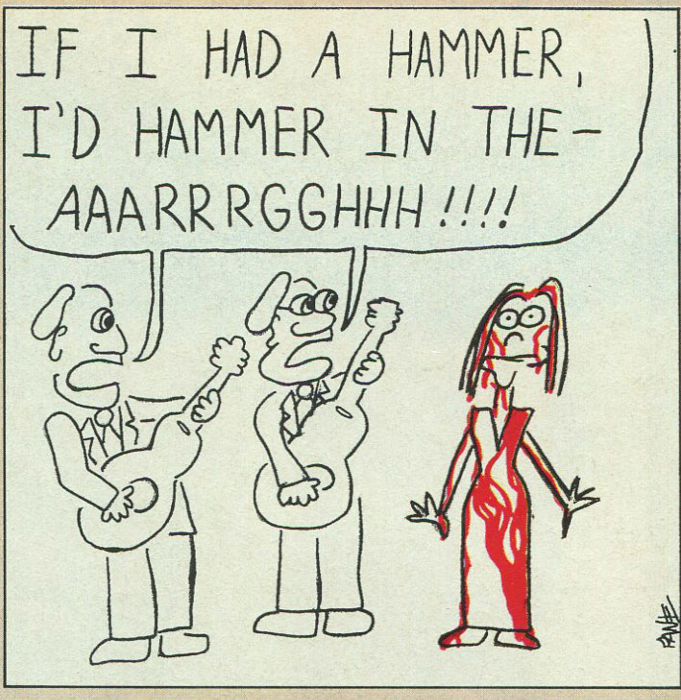
OK, Petch, we're game. Let's hear from everyone who thinks there haven't been enough horror sequels lately.

MISSING "BOOGENS"!

...I have been searching for a tape of *The Boogens* for years, but I cannot find it. Is it out on video, and do you know where I can get a copy?

Ronald Whitaker
PO Box 88
Bronx, NY 10456

Sorry, Ron, but The Boogens *(1981) has yet to slither onto videocassette.*


IF I HAD A HAMMER, I'D HAMMER IN THE- AAARRRGGHHH!!!!
PANE

Art: Timothy E. Pane

PETER, PAUL, AND CARRIE

"GERALDO" HURRAHS!

...Congrats to Tony Timpone for standing up for horror on the *Geraldo* show! Backed by producer Richard Rubinstein, *Halloween 4* and *5* star Danielle Harris and psychologist Dr. Jeffrey Gardere, he did a terrific job of defending our beloved genre. Dr. Daniel Linz retaliated with ridiculous statements linking horror with psychotic killers. Also on the board was *Stepfather* star Terry O'Quinn, who downplayed horror more than defending it. Although Geraldo seemed against the genre, he muttered that *Dawn of the Dead* was "one of my favorites." Insulted by overreacting parents, the panel did their best to keep their cool, and they did it well! I even spotted FX artist Howard Berger in the audience! Thanks, guys!

Scott Stephens
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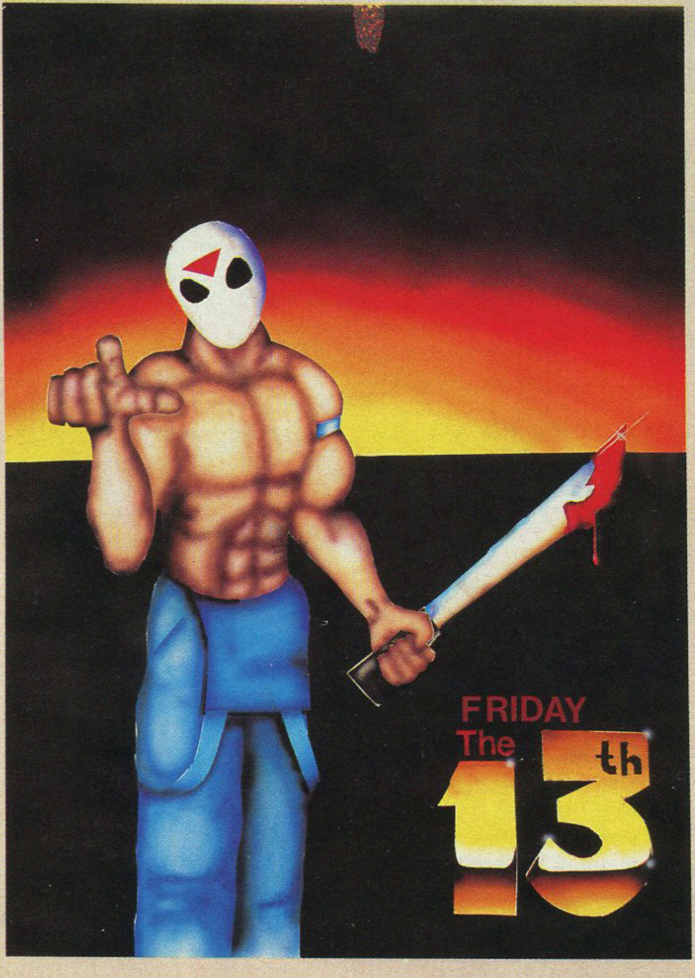
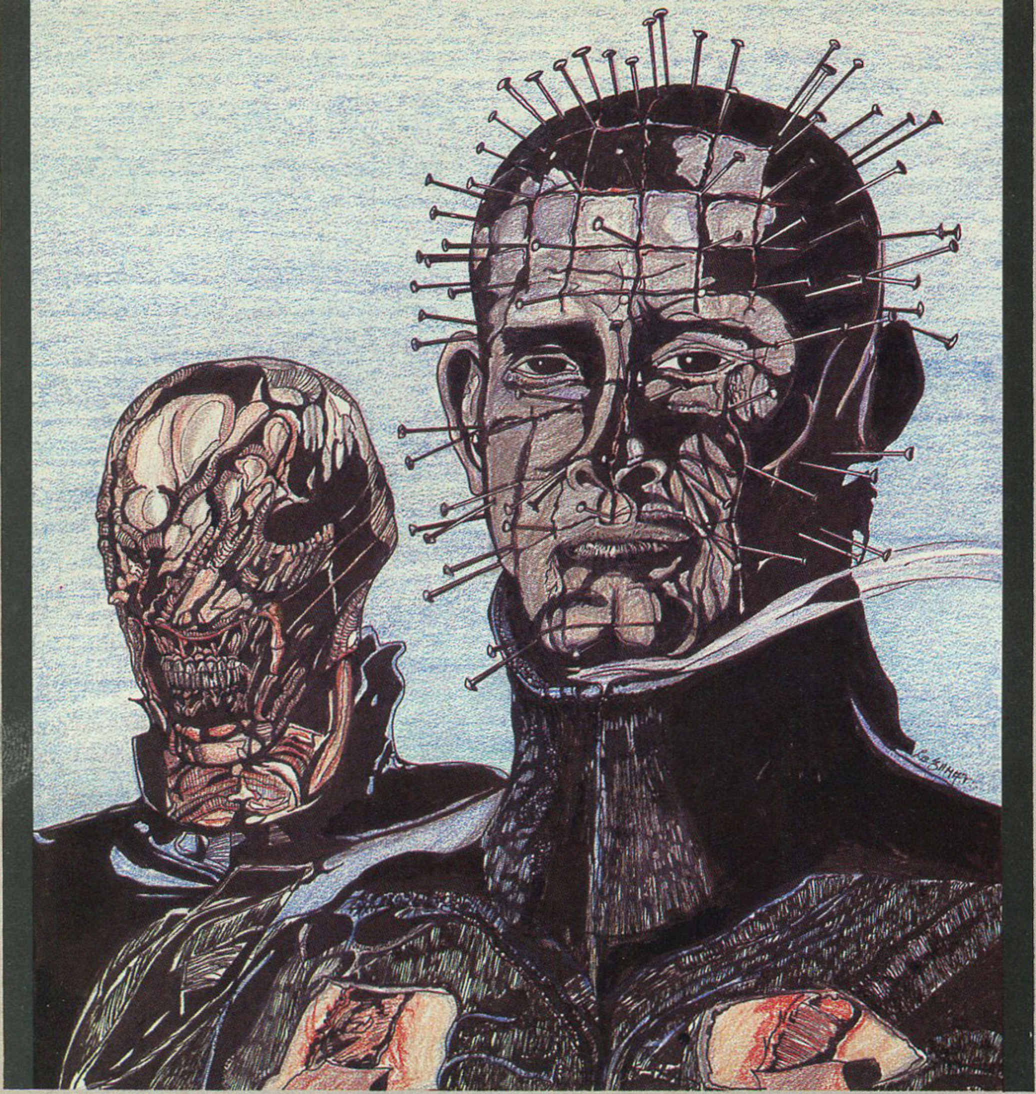


Art: Johan Fremin

ARGENTO ADULATED!

...I've just finished viewing *Suspiria*. It is an absolute masterpiece! It was definitely worth the wait. Dario Argento's use of colors and camerawork is incredible. The film contains two of the most brutal sequences ever filmed: the first killing (excerpted in *Dario Argento's World of Horror*) and the barbed wire scene with the most horrifyingly realistic slit throat I've ever seen. *Suspiria* must be watched in its unrated version or you will miss out on the nightmarish brutality of the film. Dario Argento deserves more respect in the U.S.; he is one of the best and most



Art: David Lezama

stylish of filmmakers. Forget Freddy. See *Suspiria*.

Brian Paulin
Seekonk, MA

HELP "HENRY"!

...After reading everything in GOREZONE #9 about *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*, I want to thank Tony Timpone, Kim Howard Johnson and Maitland McDonagh for all the information.

I am so damn sick of seeing the same old senseless horror sequels at the theaters while little movies that are truly good receive practically no attention at all. Who are these MPAA people? What gives them the right to judge what millions of people can see? It's not fair. I like John McNaughton's idea that the MPAA should create a category that would separate intense adult films from pornography. Of course, the MPAA won't do this; they're too busy ruining films.

I want to help fight this injustice. You people out there who are tired of seeing incredibly cut movies, and are sick of being told what you can and cannot watch, please send me your ideas, views and information on what we can do about the MPAA.

Tim Stickle
1520 Glenton Drive
Toledo, OH 43614

Check out the MPAA investigation in FANGORIA #88-89, too, and the Henry *update in FANGORIA #91.*

TERROR TRIUMPHANT!

...Sorry to read about GOREZONE's recent problems as far as distribution goes. If it's any reassurance, GOREZONE can always be found here (in the middle of nowhere!) nestled in amongst *Pro Wrestling*, *Mad* and *High Times* magazines at my local grocery. Have no fear, horror is here! I guess horror must be pretty big in my area, because your mag always sells out within a week of arriving at my local "newsstand." And since things have been relatively horrible here in recent weeks, your covers are looked at in a matter-of-fact fashion. Never worry about grossing out folks around here!

Thanks for keeping us informed on the latest in filmic frights, especially the fantastic feature on the prolific Lucio Fulci (GOREZONE #10), no doubt the reigning Godfather of Italian Gore.

Jay M. Bullbear
PO Box 133
Hominy, OK 74035-0133

CHUCK "C.H.U.D. II"!

...I just saw the worst horror film ever made, *C.H.U.D. II: Bud the Chud*. Whoever sat down and produced this movie must have been on drugs. It wasn't funny or scary. In the original *C.H.U.D.*, the Chuds were ugly, mutated creatures; in this pitiful excuse for a movie, the creatures look like pale, black-eyed people with fangs. *C.H.U.D. II* had nothing to do with the first movie and didn't even try to resemble it. I could have made a better movie with a video camera and pet gerbils. Hell, *Blood Beach* kept me awake longer. Take my advice, movie buffs, GOREZONE speaks the truth on this movie: *C.H.U.D. II* is as bad as it gets. It's the corniest, most horrible movie of the decade.

Marc Abbott
Brooklyn, NY

DUTCH "DAMAGE"!

...Five months ago, I rented *Brain Damage* in Holland. Both the earpull scene and the zipper scene were intact. So it's not true that these scenes were removed before the film was submitted to the MPAA. *Brain Damage* is one of the most original horror movies of the '80s.

Jan Cornelissen
Vaartweg 76
5106 NE Dongen
Holland

The Dutch version of the film need not be the one that the MPAA screened. Every country has its own ratings procedures. Still, it's nice to hear from a European GoreZonian who isn't suffering from governmental censorship.

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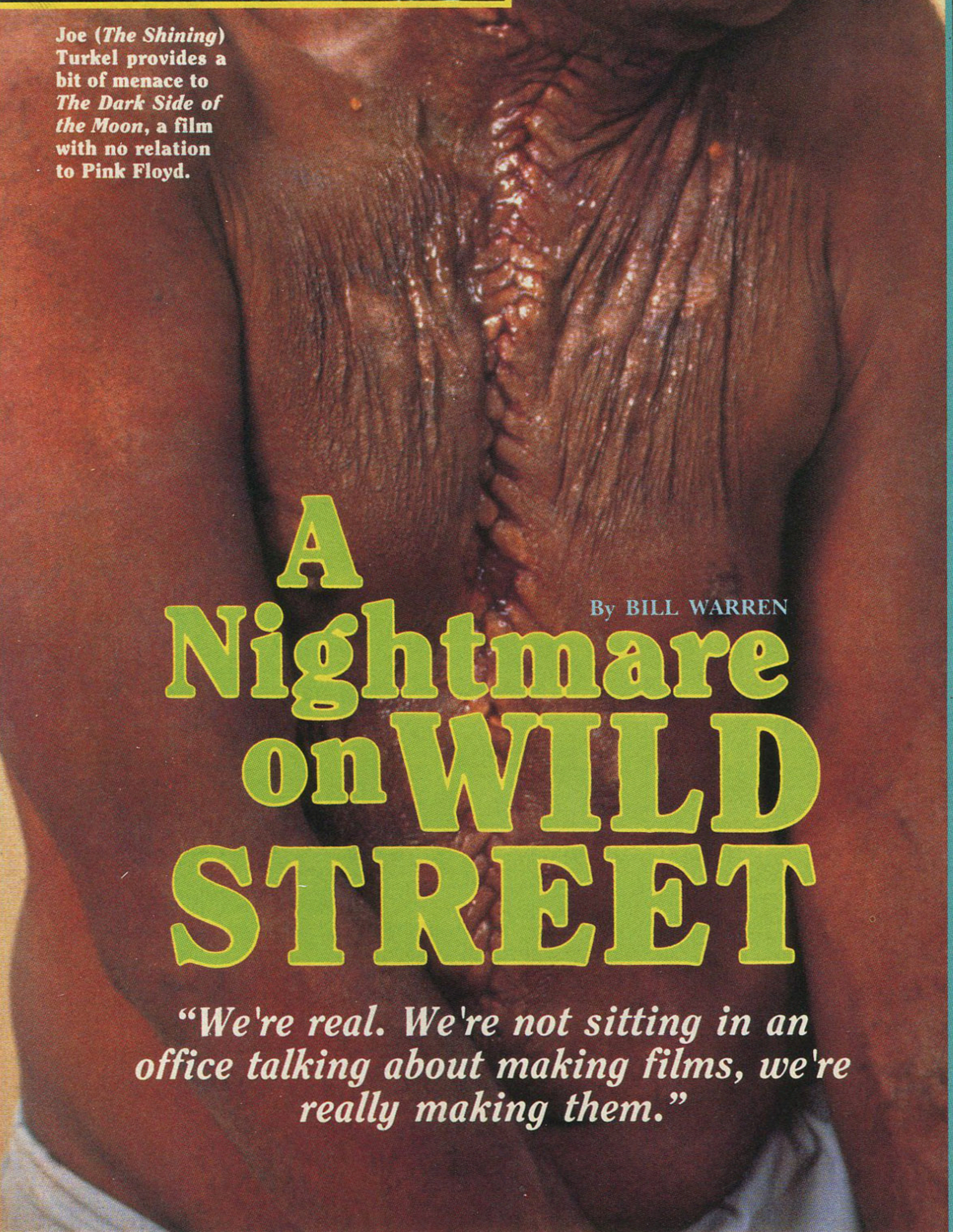
PROFILE

Joe (*The Shining*) Turkel provides a bit of menace to *The Dark Side of the Moon*, a film with no relation to Pink Floyd.



For a behind-the-scenes look at *The Bride of Re-Animator*, check out FANGORIA #91.

A Nightmare on WILD STREET

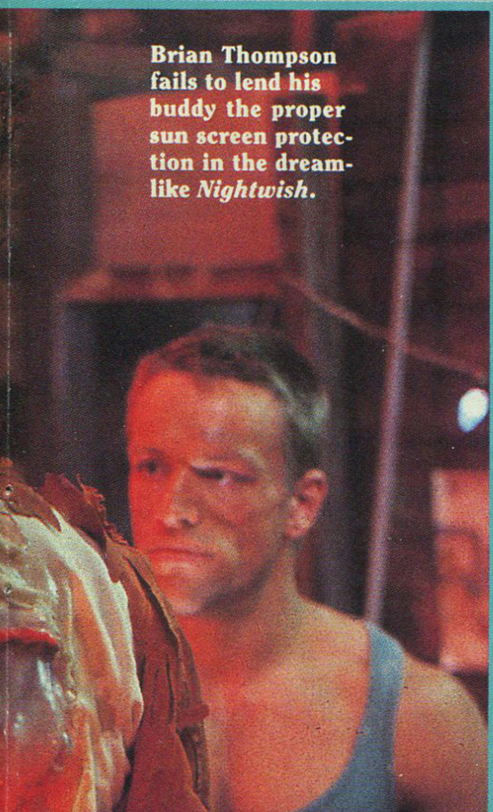
By BILL WARREN

"We're real. We're not sitting in an office talking about making films, we're really making them."

If people have trouble realizing that *Society* is a horror film, perhaps the distributor can retitle it *Orgy of the Slimesuckers*.

"There will always be a market for horror films," Keith Walley says reassuringly. "They're very commercial and they work worldwide, and people like a good scare." *You* must, or you wouldn't be reading this magazine. But this article isn't about the guys who do the scaring, it's about a guy who hires the guys who do the scaring.

The Sunset Landmark is a big pink office building in, as they say, the heart of Hollywood. It was run down for years, but has been redecorated and is now a hot place to have an office. It's here you'll find the headquarters of Wild Street Pictures, the makers of *Nightwish*, *Society*, *The Dark Side of the Moon* and *The Bride of Re-Animator*, all unreleased as this article is completed. Together with his Tokyo-based partner Paul White (Wild Street is 100 percent Japanese-financed), Keith Walley runs the operations of the company from an 8th floor office in the Sunset Landmark.



Brian Thompson fails to lend his buddy the proper sun screen protection in the dreamlike *Nightwish*.

All Photos: Copyright Wild Street

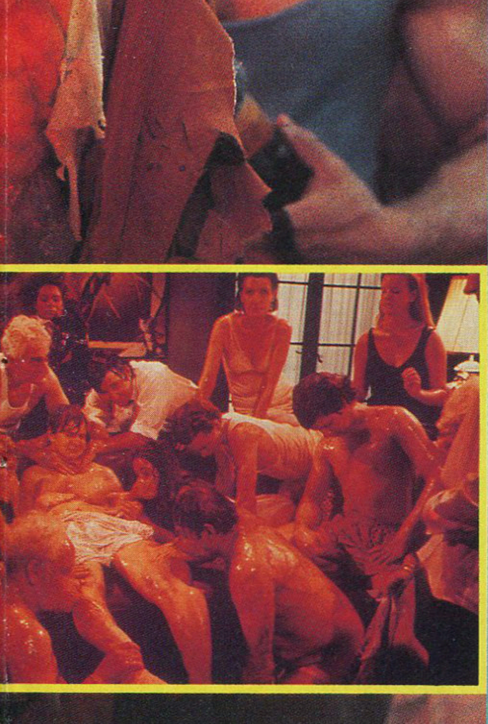


Photo: Courtesy Tom Rainone

The London-born Walley was a professional soccer player who came to America to kick that black-and-white ball around, only to be injured. "I realized one day I had no money and had to get along with my life," the handsome, blond Walley explains. His sports career had led to an interest in show business. "So I decided to get into films. At that time, everyone thought I was crazy, because everybody else wanted to get into films. But throughout my life, I have set myself very high goals, and my standards have been very high toward all I achieved."

Walley made the usual rounds of Hollywood, until a friend suggested he try Charles Band at Empire Pictures. "I knew nothing about the industry, but I was willing to work seven days a week and 24 hours a day," he recalls. "'Don't pay me any money until I've proved myself,' I told Band. And he said, 'When can you start?' Charlie Band gave me my start in this industry. I was with him for five years; I ended up in foreign distribution. I learned a lot being with his company. I always felt I wanted to get into production. It's a success story that not a lot of people believe can be achieved, but I suppose I'm living proof that it happened."

In 1988, White and Walley formed Wild Street Pictures, using financing from a company they co-own in Japan, and from Japanese investors. "Wild Street is a very new company. We've only been around for 18 months. We wanted to finish two films first before we actually formed our own sales company—which we did, with *Nightwish* and *Society*. Having done that, we worked in reverse of what usually happens in this town, which is preselling movies and *then* making them."

Walley firmly believes that it was the policy of preselling films that led to the collapse of companies from DEG through Cannon to Vestron on to Empire. The company would announce a slate of new films, get distributors to fund the pictures before they were made, and then use that money to spread around all their other projects. "It was great preselling, but if you're going to presell movies, you've got to *make* them. What's happening now is the marketplace and industry are more realistic. We will never put a film into production unless we have all the money up front, so we don't have to rely on preselling for financing. If you could go back two years ago, you would find companies like Empire and New World relying on presells to finance their movies, and that's where the whole industry fell down."

So he sells his films very differently. The Cannes Film Festival in France is one of the primary arenas for selling new movies, and Walley went prepared. "My German distributor wanted to sit down and do a deal. I said, 'No, I want you to go see *Society* first. Then come back tomorrow, and we can sit down.' I don't want people buying something that, when they get delivery of the thing, they say, 'God, what did I *buy*?'"

Thanks to those Japanese backers, "We have a lot of money at our fingertips to make movies. We want to make sure that they are the right movies, that we aren't putting our investors at risk or ourselves at risk," Walley explains. "We felt that four to five movies a year is a comfortable number for us at the present time. On the other hand, I've sometimes wondered why people invest in movies, because it's the riskiest business in the world. You should buy real estate for a couple of million bucks and see a nice return on it."

Gore and horror may still be popular, Walley feels, but the genre has been damaged by a lot of crap. Partly for that reason, Wild Street is moving more toward science fiction. "The video

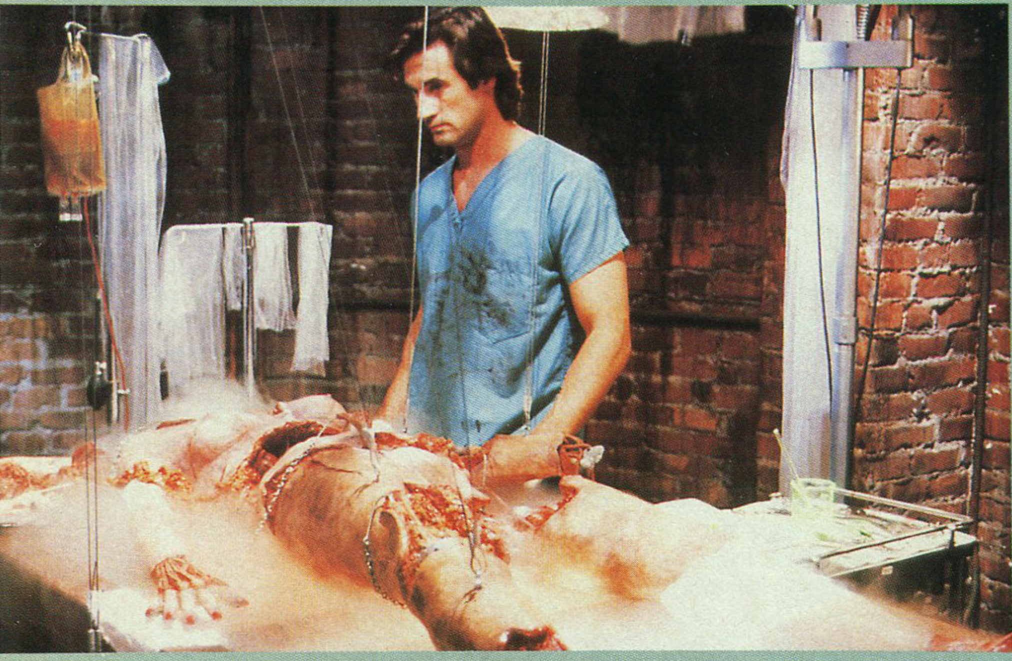


Photo: Courtesy KNB EFX Group

Dan Cain wonders where he left his car keys in the eagerly-awaited *Bride of Re-Animator*.

revolution gave a lot of producers license to make movies that never would have been made if video had not been here. Films would get made for very little money, and quality really suffered. There's always room for a good horror movie that doesn't deal so much with blood and guts," Walley maintains. "Once you start making films like that, you really limit your market, anyway, since a lot of the foreign territories now—well, it's a struggle. Germany's very strict now with its censorship, and so is the U.K., Australia, Scandinavia."

Society is apparently Walley's pride and joy among the films they've made so far. Walley is mild and soft-spoken, but he's clearly proud of Brian Yuzna's weirdofest. "I think *Society*'s going to cause quite a controversy here when it's released, hopefully this February. People have said, 'How can you market this film? You can't compare it to anything else.' But to me, that's the beauty of it: It's different, it's original, it has aspects that I don't think anyone has seen in a film before. The same with *Dark Side of the Moon* and *Bride of Re-Animator*—they all have something that will be very satisfying to the public."

Everyone expected major censorship hassles, but Walley reports, "In the U.K., our distributor Medusa submitted *Society* to the censor board there, and they passed it without one cut. There's no blood or guts in it. It's done in a fantastic way, the images are Daliesque, like Bosch. Instead of playing it for horror, we played it for humor, in a very lighthearted, entertaining way. You're going to laugh whether you like it or not, and you might come out saying, 'God, I *hated* it!'—but you *will* laugh. It wasn't made to be shocking. It was made as pure entertainment."

Wild Street also made the low-budget *The Dark Side of the Moon.* "We concentrated on the storyline," Walley feels. "I think *Dark Side of the Moon* is a film that proves, as does *Society*, that you don't have to spend a hell of a lot of money to make successful films. We really concentrate on different, original ideas. People don't go to a theater and enjoy a movie because it cost $20 million. All they want is to be entertained. They want to come out of the theater and say, 'Yeah, I'd pay six bucks to go see that again.' And that's what we do here. We put every penny we possibly can on the screen and bring together the best talent, the best production personnel we possibly can."

A videotape of *Cocoon* silently unreels on a big monitor in the corner of the clean, white Wild Street offices, while Walley talks about other products from his company. There's *Nightwish*, for instance. "A little psychological thriller, very different," Walley ventures. "The whole film is about somebody's dream, but you don't really know that until the end. Surrealistic, dreamlike things appear for no reason at all, and suddenly will be brushed off. People were telling us that we can't do that, but at the end of *Nightwish*, suddenly you go, 'Now I know why all these things went *boomp! boomp! boomp!*' The mind clicks back to all the things you thought were confusing, and they make sense in the end."

Then, of course, there's *The Bride of Re-Animator* (Fango #91), to which all GoreZonians are looking forward with the anticipation that boring people harbor for Christmas. "We tried very much to make this movie stand on its own two feet," promises Walley. "Jeffrey Combs comes back to play Herbert West, and he's absolutely fabulous. Jeff was born for this role. There's black humor, comedy, bizarre effects. Because he doesn't have his body anymore, Dr. Hill ends up flying around with bat wings. Maybe we can cash in on the *Batman* trend," Walley deadpans.

Wild Street has two main projects for the future, one of which is a new version of H.G. Wells' *The Invisible Man.* "We intend to make it more of a science fiction type of film, using the idea of invisibility as a focal point in the movie," Walley enthuses. "We are trying to perfect some new invisibility effects. To take it one step further than the water tentacle in *The Abyss* would be absolutely fabulous. We don't want it to be just the floating teacup type of thing, but a real fantastic element. We feel very confident that when we have the script together, it will have the impact *The Terminator* did when it was first released."

The biggest production in Wild Street's wings is David (*Warlock*) Twohy's *The Grand Tour*, based on a story by Henry Kuttner and C.L. Moore, which Walley calls more of a soft SF story, somewhat like *Cocoon* (which explains the videotape). "We were very fortunate to get this script by David

Twohy, who's writing *Alien III* for Fox. It was one of the best first drafts I've read to date. We're spending around $8 million on this one, but for that $8 million, we'll get $15 million in value. David is going to direct the film, his first directing job. We feel confident that he can make this film what it needs to be.

"It starts in the world of the future, a perfect place, no diseases, no disasters—a pretty boring place to live," Walley details. "For entertainment, tours have been set up that are able to go back in time to witness disasters. In our present, there's a little town, very picturesque, very serene, very small, where everybody knows each other. Suddenly, one day these tourists turn up, attractively dressed, beautiful people. They come out of nowhere. They're there to witness a big disaster that's going to hit this little town in a few days' time, but they aren't saying what the disaster is going to be. There are wonderful little twists that go on in this movie. When I read the script, it had me saying, 'God, why didn't I think of that 10 pages ago?!' We're very, very excited about the whole thing, because it's so different."

Wild Street, vows Walley, will look for the best talent available (which, of course, everyone says), and he believes in giving first-time directors their chance. He's looking for originality, too. "Our theory here is that whatever we make, we want it to be a little different from what has already been done," he specifies. "To me, there has been an abundance of blood and guts. You go into a video store, and that's all you see in the horror section—nothing original about the movies. If you're going to kill someone now, people don't want to see it done in a graphic way, but more in the Hitchcock style of tension and horror. I think people are now more into that."

Like many people in the movie biz, Walley can't say enough about what Hitchcock did. "And he did it in very simple ways. Filmmaking is very simple; what happens is that you try to overcomplicate yourself in order to be creative, and in the end, you twist yourself into so many knots people don't know what you were trying to make. The key to any successful movie is the script. You can't build a house without a blueprint, because it will fall down."

Walley is optimistic about Wild Street's prospects for the future. "We're real. We're not just sitting in an office talking about making movies, we're *really* making them, and people know that." Ten years from now, he sees Wild Street as "a major force in the field of film entertainment. We've had great success up to this point, not through the release of the films, but with our distributors because of the type of movies we've offered them. If you keep offering an interesting variety of movies that work—and that's the key word in this industry, they have to work, and it's up to the moviegoing people to determine that—we will be a major force in this industry, without any question." ✸

Though Wild Street prides itself on making movies, none of their ambitious releases, including the nearly two-year old *Nightwish*, have yet reached theaters.

"We tried very much to make *Bride of Re-Animator* stand on its own two feet."

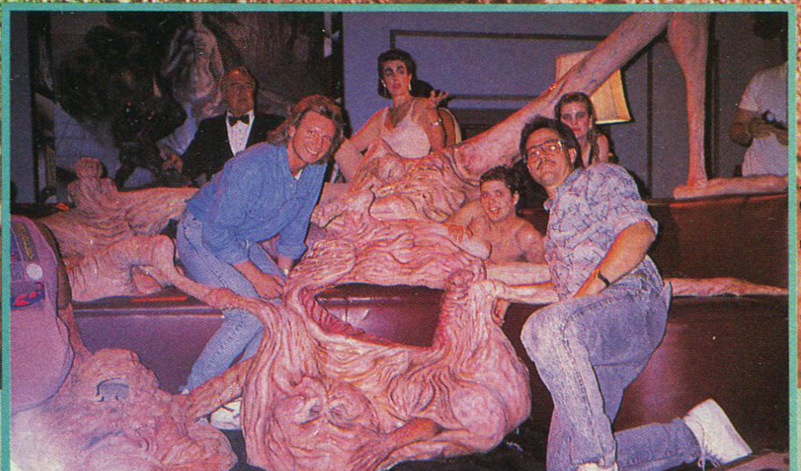
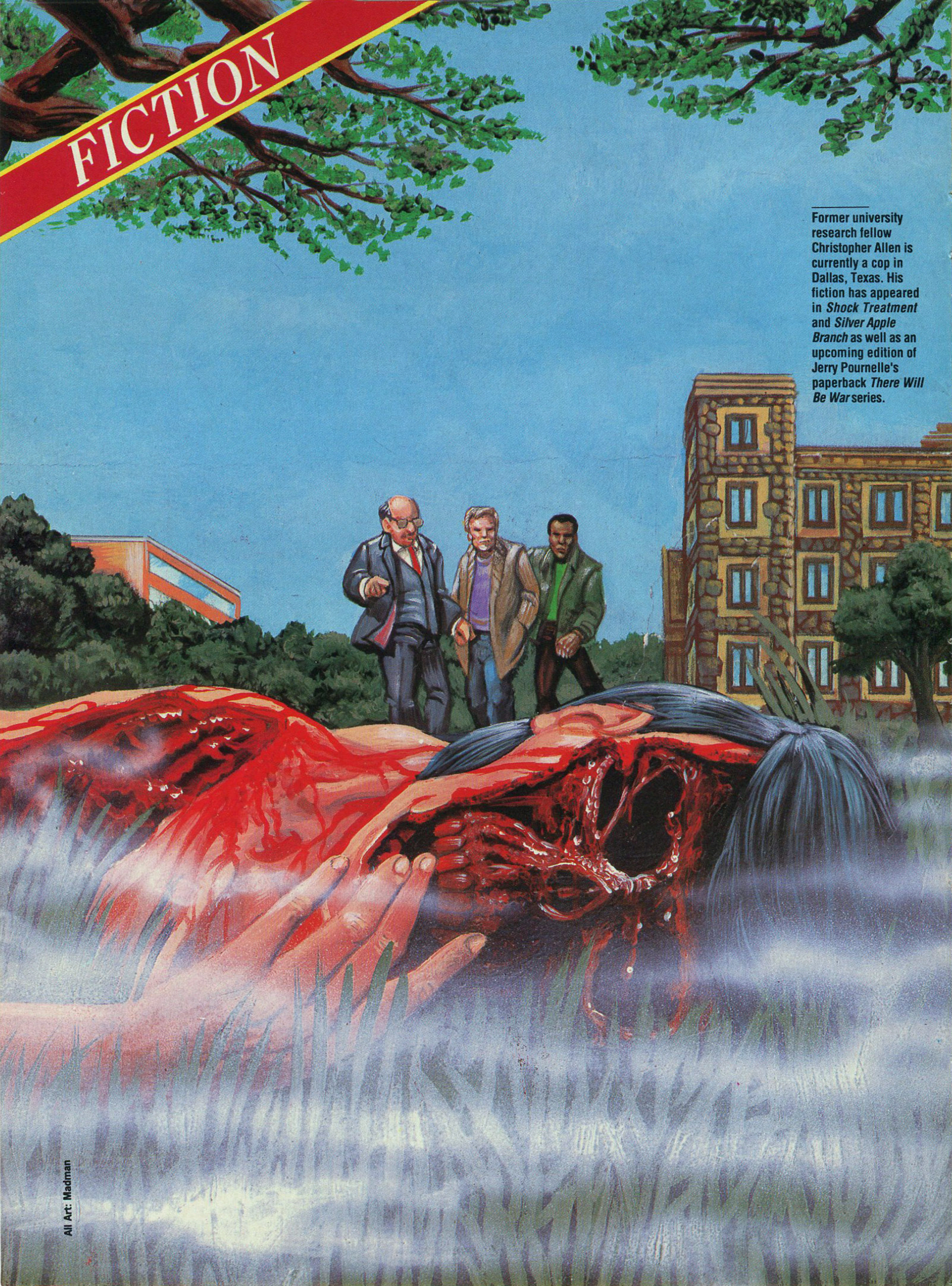


Photo: Courtesy Tom Rainone

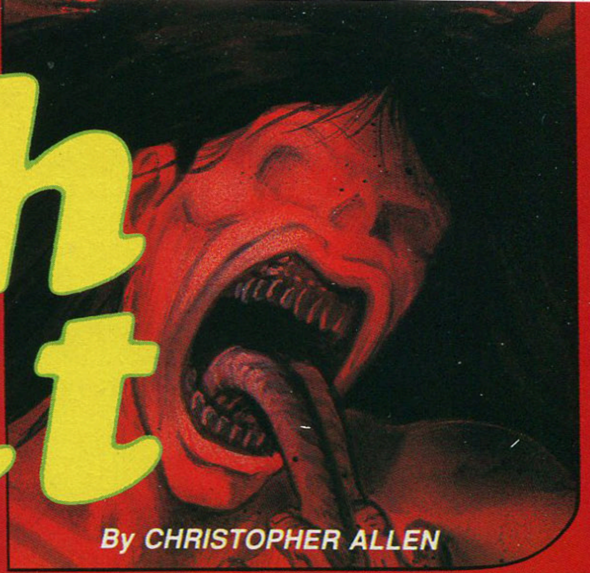
Walley (left, in blue), seen here with fellow *Society* slime slurpers Tom Rainone (inside creature) and director Brian Yuzna (right), went from soccer playing to filmmaking. See, there's hope for all of us.



Former university research fellow Christopher Allen is currently a cop in Dallas, Texas. His fiction has appeared in *Shock Treatment* and *Silver Apple Branch* as well as an upcoming edition of Jerry Pournelle's paperback *There Will Be War* series.

All Art: Madman

Witch Hunt



By CHRISTOPHER ALLEN

This is the fifth killing in two and a half weeks, gentlemen, all in or around that damned university. Listen, detectives, hear what I'm saying: I want it stopped." Raindrops like tiny gray nails popped against the window glass of the captain's office. He rested his fists on the hardwood top of his desk, leaned forward at his two detectives expectantly.

"We hear you, Captain," Kay Crecelius broke the awkward silence, sitting backwards on a creaky wooden chair and resting his elbows on its straight back. "But this investigation is going nowhere. We've set up decoys, we've got uniforms making double patrols through there every night. We've had practically the whole undergraduate student body evacuated since midweek. I mean, no prints, no witnesses, no motive—that makes a murder case difficult enough. But when you can't even identify the *victims*..."

The captain motioned him to silence. He pursed his lips, slid into the black patent chair behind his desk. "I know. I know, Kay. That's why this case bothers me. It's all too offbeat."

> **No prints, no witnesses, no motive—that makes a murder case difficult enough. But when you can't identify the *victims*..."**

Crecelius twirled a toothpick between his teeth. "You have a talent for understatement, Captain."

The captain smiled back at the black detective. "See this chair, Kay?" He polished the leather with his coat sleeve. "This office looks like a war zone; always does. But no matter how crazy this place gets, I keep this chair spit-shined. I do that because I figure, as long as I've got time in my day to polish my chair, I've got a lid on this precinct. It's worked for five years now, Lieutenant." He leaned back, tossed his glasses onto his desk. "In the last two and a half weeks, I've polished this chair exactly twice."

Crecelius hooked his thumbs in the beltloops of his jeans, spared a glance at his partner, seated on a short couch. Arkady Velich rested his face on one fist, playing the great stoneface.

"Captain Andersen," he spared his partner a glare before turning back to the captain, "we've gone through the university records, enrollments, payrolls. We can't put a positive on any one of these bodies."

Andersen nodded, arched one eyebrow at Crecelius' partner. "What about it, Arkady? You have nothing to add here?"

Arkady Velich raised his eyes to the captain, scratched his gray-brown hair. He shook his head.

Andersen rolled his eyes. "Look, Arkady, I know you didn't want this case. Lighten up. I need my best cops on this one. I want it shut down, fast, before it spooks that whole campus."

"Nothing spooks that campus."

"Ah, well. He can talk, after all." The captain leaned on his desk. Crecelius rolled his eyes. "Listen, detectives, I want this ended. I want the killing to stop. Get over to Waterbury-Kensington. Maybe this latest slaying will tell us something."

"Right, Captain." Crecelius grabbed his leather jacket.

Velich straightened his ruffled maroon sportcoat, followed him. "I doubt it."

"What is it with you today?" Kay jabbed as they shouldered through the squadroom.

Velich shook his head, his eyes sagging in sallow cheeks. "This whole damn case. I want off it. I want to spend my time on something I can solve."

Kay pushed open a door to the stairway. "Great idea, man, just leave this guy out there to beat people's brains out. Real responsible attitude."

Velich wheeled on him, jabbed his forefinger into Kay's chest. "I don't need that crap from you! I'll measure my reprimand tally against yours any time!"

Kay raised his hands in mock surrender. "All right, Arkady. Sorry. You just surprised me, man. You know, I figured you'd want this guy stopped more than anybody." The detective gestured at him with his toothpick. "You really oughtta lighten up, man."

Velich straightened his sportscoat. "Yeah, Kay. Soon. When this stops. Real soon."

"You know something I don't?" Kay smiled, and he headed for the parking lot.

Waterbury-Kensington University wasn't ten minutes outside the city. Suburbia surrounded it on all sides. To the uninitiated, the campus nonetheless seemed like another world. Its outer brick wall, latticed with the appropriate ivy, served as an immediate barrier, but the line of trees that grew within, completely surrounding the campus itself, was rather more isolating. The student body was fond of calling the stand of tall pines the Black Forest. That struck the two detectives as wholly appropriate.

The fifth body was on a wet sidewalk behind Arkham Hall, an imposing graystone that housed the Psych department. On any university campus in the country, a crime this grisly would attract three-quarters of the active student body; at WK, it drew two old men in overcoats and an 86-year-old campus cop in riot gear. Velich rolled his eyes. It figured.

Dean Bridger was, as always, dour. "This, detectives, is grotesque. I am not fond of beginning my mornings in this fashion. I trust you are making some progress in your investigation?"

Kay shrugged. "Maybe this one will help."

Velich knelt over the body. "He's right, Kay. It's messy." Like the four victims before it, it was badly disfigured. Most of its skull had been crushed, and its facial flesh sheared off.

"Contusions all across the body, like the previous victims," Velich recited numbly. "Left pectoral muscle cut away, like the face. No doubt about it."

"There are the burned patches of grass, as well," Dean Bridger added, pointing to several blackened spots in the lawn. Kay nodded. "What about the hands, Arkady?"

Velich stood without looking. "Intact. We can lift prints, but we won't be able to identify them any easier than the previous four."

Kay stopped chewing his toothpick. "You're getting awfully damned sure of yourself."

Velich lifted an eyebrow. "Maybe so. We'll try the prints."

"There is something else, Detective," said the older man with the dean. His voice was precise and quiet, and thickly Russian. "Arkady, I believe he called you?"

Velich nodded carefully. "Arkady Velich. My father was born in St. Petersburg."

"Leningrad, you mean. And you?"

"Born here. I'm an American citizen."

The older man smiled. "Well, no need to apologize for it."

Dean Bridger stepped between the two, carefully pushing Velich away. "This is Dr. Makarov, Detective. He teaches in our history department. He asked to see the latest victim, but you'd already taken the body, so when this happened, I saw no harm—"

"Fine, Dean," Kay interrupted. "Doc, you said something about a clue we'd missed?"

"A clue?" The old professor pushed back his spectacles. "Oh, yes." He kept his eyes on Arkady as he pointed to the body. "There, on the chest. You will have to turn him over."

"Damn, what is that? A tattoo?" Kay leaned closer, followed the professor's finger. Where the victim's left chest muscle had been cut away, right at the edge of the torn flesh, was a black circlet. The edge of some marking, or tattoo.

"You recognize that, Comrade?" Makarov's voice was soft, but edged. He continued to stare at Arkady.

"Arkady, it's like a body inscription or something," Kay whispered. "We'll get the corpse under a scope. Maybe we can get a partial, try to match it up with a tattoo parlor, or some sorta weird cult. We could pull an ID of the victim." He widened his grin until his teeth showed. "Maybe get a lead on our murderer." He poked his partner, who stood staring numbly at the marking.

"Come on, Arkady, this is a *lead*. This is good news. Why the grim face, man?"

"Yes, Detective," Dr. Makarov nodded, casually pulling tight his wool outercoat. "You do look pale."

That's it?" Kay frowned at the telephone. "Right, Captain. We'll let you know when we leave the dean's office."

He hung up and raised his hands. "Lab didn't find much. Not enough of the marking to tell. Did say it was probably circular, and if the circle was complete, the tattoo probably covered most of the left chest."

"Well, doesn't that tell you something?" the dean asked.

Velich arched an eyebrow at the dean. "Should it?"

The dean spread his hands. "Well, yes. All the victims have had their left breasts or chest muscles cut away by the murderer. Ergo, he was cutting these tattoos from them. Obviously some sort of cult slaying, some sort of ritual."

"Not a bad theory. That's three guys dead now, and two women, right, Arkady?"

"And each an alternate slaying," Makarov interrupted, "first a man, then a woman." Kay frowned at him, and the professor shrugged. "Excuse me, Lieutenant."

Kay waved his hand, nodded back at the dean. "Certainly looks cult-related."

Arkady exhaled. "What about ID?"

Kay frowned again. "I knew you were gonna ask that. Like the previous four; prints don't match up, and nobody's been reported missing yet, except some fraternity's dog. Like you predicted: no ID."

"The detective has been very perceptive in predicting this case, I've noticed." Makarov inclined his head. "Most astute. Uncanny, I'd be tempted to say."

Arkady thumped the dean's desk. "Alright, professor, you've had your eyes glued to me since I got out of the car. Suppose I turn that around: What's your interest in all this? You examine corpses part-time? A hobby with you?"

"You are nervous, Comrade Velich; perhaps you would like a drink?"

Arkady's tousled hair fell down in his eyes. "Perhaps you would like to answer my question, 'Comrade.' And while you're at it, I've got another one: What the hell do you know about that birthmark?"

Makarov reached to Bridger's desk for his drink. He shifted his eyes casually to the glass. "Birthmark, Detective? I thought we were calling it a tattoo." His eyes flickered back to Arkady.

The detective crossed his arms, glared from under his heavy Slavic brow at the old man. After a moment, he wheeled abruptly for the door. "Come on, Kay. We're wasting our time here. I'm sure the 'doctor' has some dusty old term paper to soak up his attention."

Kay tipped his leather cap, shrugged to the dean. "We'll be in touch." He rose from the side of Bridger's desk, stared for a moment at Makarov before following his partner.

"Don't tell me to lighten up again, Kay," Velich said as Crecelius caught up to him across the lawn.

Kay stopped him. Gray drizzle splattered his face. "No way. You're past that. I don't know what it is with you, Arkady, but you're losing it on this one. You better get a grip, partner. You got me worried." He released Arkady's arm. "I mean it."

Velich wet his lips, tugged at his corduroy sportcoat. "It's all right, Kay. It is. Sorry. That guy was just eating me. You saw the razz he was giving me. It's just this case has got me spooked, and I don't need Rasputin in there, uh—"

"Voodooin' your psyche?"

Velich nodded. "Voodooing my psyche."

Kay smiled. "Yeah, well, he gave me the crawls, too. Come on, let's hit the station. We're getting wet. Why is it always raining on this damned campus?"

"I wouldn't say this unless it was serious, Captain. I really think you ought to pull Arkady off this one."

Andersen closed his eyes and exhaled. "Don't you start, Kay."

Kay pursed his lips. "Captain, you want this thing solved. I don't think Arkady Velich is the right guy for the case."

Velich was outside the captain's office, thumbing through a case folder. Andersen watched him for a moment. Good cop, he thought; no denying that. But he really was off on this one, Andersen realized. He could see it in the tension—no, the *wariness* in Velich's movements. He'd seen cops spooked by particularly brutal cases, and this certainly qualified, but it was different with Arkady. He wasn't nervous, exactly.

He was defensive.

Andersen ran a hand over his short-cropped hair. "Make your point, Detective."

Kay gestured, then tightened his fists. Finally he slumped back into the overstuffed sofa. "No point, Captain. I thought...Hey, I just think you should pull Arkady off this case. As a favor, if nothing else."

Arkady rapped on the glass door before Kay could continue. Andersen motioned him inside.

"Sorry to interrupt, Captain. I'm calling it a day."

"You looking for some company this evening, partner?"

He shook his head. "I don't think so. May have caught something in the rain. I'm gonna start a fire and curl up with a good book. Nothing strenuous."

Kay Crecelius arched one sardonic eyebrow. "Not Tolstoy again?"

Velich managed a mock glare. "Very funny. Bradbury, maybe."

Kay grinned, shook his head. "Knock yourself out."

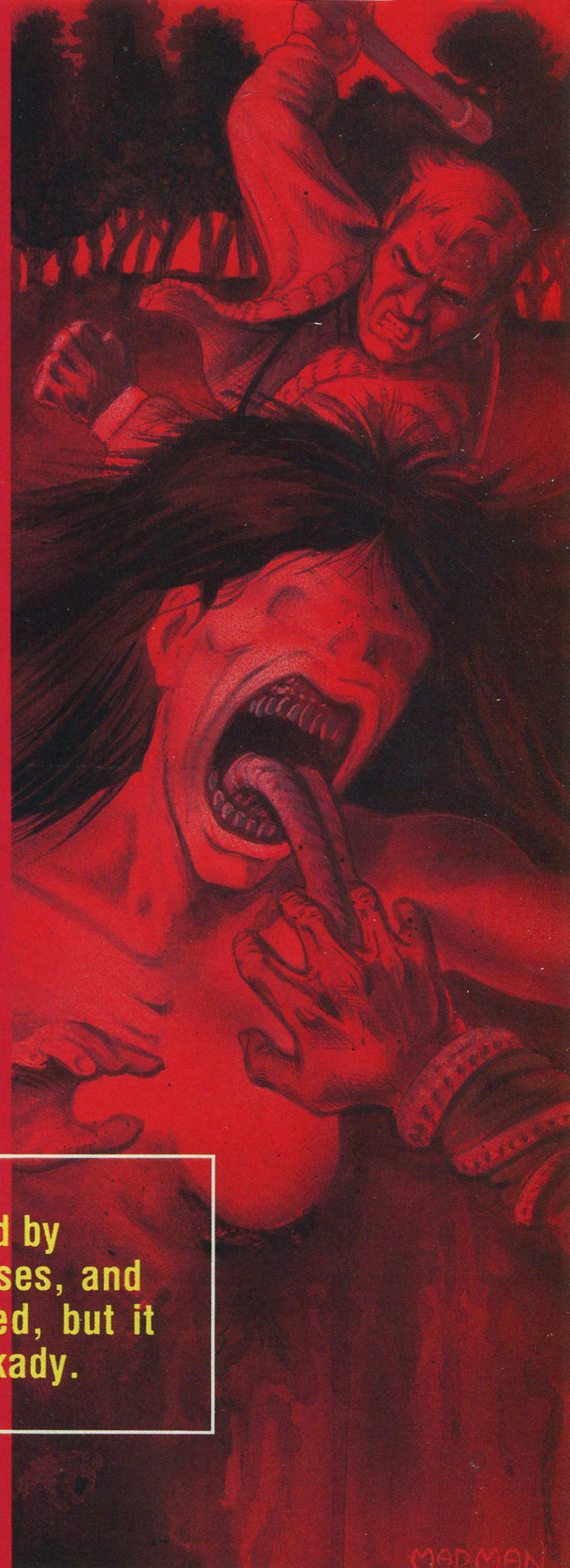
"I will. G'night, Captain."

Andersen waved him off, rubbed the bridge of his nose as Arkady crossed the squadroom. He replaced his glasses.

"He's tired, Kay. He's entitled to that. Considering this case, I'm surprised you're not a little more rattled," Andersen reasoned. "But I'm going to need more to pull him. Something substantial. Now, if you've got it, I'm ready to listen, but it'll have to be something solid."

Kay leaned back against the cool maroon leather. He shook his head. "No sir. I'm not criticizing Arkady's performance, if that's what you're looking for."

He'd seen cops spooked by particularly brutal cases, and this certainly qualified, but it was different with Arkady.



"Good enough, then, Lieutenant. I'll expect you to keep me apprised of the case." Kay nodded, grabbed his jacket. The captain stopped him as he reached the door. "Detective, if you do have reason to suspect anything in this, *anyone*, you are to tell me."

"Understood, Captain." The door rattled as it shut.

"I hope so," Andersen muttered, rubbing his eyes.

Kay ignored the few good-byes directed his way, barrelled into the stairwell. He nearly trampled Dean Bridger.

"Sorry about that, sir. I was in a hurry, and—"

The dean stepped back, brushed at his overcoat. "No need. I was just on the way to see your captain, as a matter of fact."

That stopped Kay. "Uh...you were going to see Captain Andersen?"

The dean smiled. "Not to be concerned, Detective. I was going to pay you and your partner a compliment, actually.

"Yes, I know how hard you've been working. Poor Detective Velich seemed bothered by Dr. Makarov today. No need for it, I assure you the old fellow was merely being overcurious, and I wanted to be certain no feathers were ruffled. I mean, we all want the same thing, really."

"Yeah, I suppose we all do. The captain is right through there," Kay pointed, trying to slip down the stairs past the dean.

"True enough, yes. I just thought I'd drop by, thank your superior for your work."

"Well, we appreciate that," Kay worked himself around Bridger, started backing down the stairs.

"I recognize you've not had great success in this case, and are probably feeling a bit frustrated at the moment—" Kay rolled his eyes. "—but when I saw Detective Velich across campus last night, I had to respect—"

"Wait a minute, Dean," Kay stopped him. "You saw Arkady at WKU last night?"

"Yes, across the commons. He—"

"What time?"

"Well, after my last tutorial. Ten, ten-thirty, perhaps. Detective, are you well? You look a bit—"

"Tired. I look tired. I gotta go, Dean," Kay shouted, bounding down the stairs.

Dean Bridger waited at the landing until he heard the detective crash through the door below. He pulled a pipe from beneath his overcoat, tapped absently at the bowl. "Entirely too highstrung, that young man," he mumbled.

Darkness suited Waterbury-Kensington. It got dark quickly, and it got very dark. The thick trees hugged the night close around the old buildings, like a blanket, Kay decided. No, like a veil. A shroud.

"Oh, great," he growled at himself. "Scare yourself. That's really gonna help. Damned weird-ass campus."

Crecelius really didn't like himself for being here. Arkady Velich was a good cop, damn near the best partner Kay'd ever had. He deserved better than the sort of suspicions Kay now had rattling around in the back of his head. The evidence was purely coincidental, Kay felt. Coincidental, hell; there *was* no evidence.

Still, Kay had been a cop too long not to have at least some passing faith in hunches. And when he'd stopped to check on Arkady's "cold," Arkady hadn't been home. So here he was, prowling around the single darkest campus in the known world, looking for—hell, he didn't even know what.

The ancient chime atop Malory Hall struck the hour; Kay Crecelius sprang at the sudden noise, tangling himself in the underbrush outside the old hall before he realized it was just the old clock. By the twelfth toll, he had managed to calm himself again. He was just pulling free of the clutching briars when the last chime was overwhelmed by a scream.

He cursed as the branches tore at his hands and neck, broke free of the brush at a dead run. He bolted across the open commons, drawing the automatic from under his left arm. The scream came again, this time from behind him. He slipped on the wet grass, scrambled back in the direction he'd come as the awful wailing came again, off to his right.

He spun on one heel. Twenty yards away, two figures moved from the brush onto a narrow sidewalk between Malory and another old tower. Pale blue light from a short streetlamp threw them into lurid, almost surreal relief. The woman—slight, apparently stark naked, with her back to him—retreated from a larger figure slashing at her crazily with a dull metal club. Kay's mouth dropped dumbly open. The man struck her with the thick pipe, her jet hair swirling as she crumpled from the blow.

It was Arkady Velich.

Crecelius stood shocked only a moment longer, before his training confounded his astonishment. He raised the .45, steadied it with his other hand. "Drop it, Arkady," he called. "Not another move."

It was Arkady's turn to stare dumbfounded. He stepped back, shaking. "Kay? My God, what are you doing here?"

Crecelius was on autopilot, speaking without thinking, operating by rote. His voice didn't waver. "Put down the weapon, Arkady. Step away from the girl."

"Girl?" Velich seemed puzzled for a moment, then looked down at the crumpled form. "Oh. Oh no, Kay. You're onto something you don't understand. You have to let me finish this."

"She's still alive?" Kay kept the gun levelled at his partner, closed the distance to the girl. "For your sake, I hope—"

The pale blue light made the whole scene a little unearthly. When the slender girl suddenly sprang up before Kay Crecelius, lunged at him like a wild thing, gurgling a wailing, haunting snarl, it seemed as though she were barely moving at all. It seemed as though he had forever to see her wet black hair whip around her as she spun, as though he had a lifetime to see the face her turn revealed. Not a face at all, actually, only a blank, wrinkled forehead and a maw like a madman's, lips peeled back around slippery black teeth and a spittle-white tongue that lashed out at him, whipping the blue-cold air for his face. No eyes, no features, only that great devouring mouth.

(continued on page 31)

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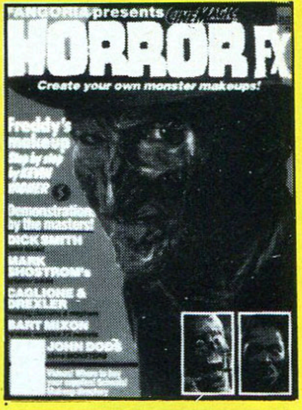

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By LARRY BARSKY

DELIVER US FROM EVIL

"...steamy, sexy, stylish and above all scary..."

Hey, get ready to discover that everything you know could be wrong. It seems that Adam and Eve *weren't* the only humanoid inhabitants in the Garden of Eden. In fact, Eve wasn't even the first female homo erectus biped ever created. If you can handle that dastardly concept, you should love Paragon Arts International's newest extravaganza, *Deliver Us From Evil* (formerly *Night Angel*).

Remember, Paragon is the same outfit that brought us *Witchboard* and *Night of the Demons*, so maybe they're on to something here. This flick is steamy, sexy, stylish and above all scary; director Dominique Othenin-Girard (GOREZONE #10) has structured one hell of a movie based on the legend of the storm demon Lilith, whom screenwriters Joe Augustyn and Walter Josten date back to ancient Babylon and Hebrew Cabalist mystics. Lilith, the movie claims, was created at the same time as Adam but ejected from the Garden because she refused to be subservient to man. (Feminists could have a field day with this one.) She then fled to the banks of the Red Sea and fornicated with demons, eventually mutating into one herself to become mankind's ultimate femme fatale, the Queen of Hell. And now she's back, ready to turn the world into a hedonistic, possessed, sex-crazed planet under her ungodly domination.

Young European director Othenin-Girard, whose last genre credit was *Halloween 5*, kicks off the action with the exquisite Lilith rising in perfect human-female form out of some primordial guck, one hand still a green claw as a reminder of the demon within (thanks to FX maestro Steve Johnson). Her quest for world domination through sex will be won once her brazen image graces the front cover of high-fashion magazine *Siren*, for all who gaze upon her picture soon turn into lust-crazed, sex-starved, tranced-out Jell-O. But when the publisher of *Siren* turns down her front cover proposition, Lilith (ravishingly portrayed by Eastern European model Isa Andersen) mysteriously appears in his bedroom...in his bed...right next to his sleeping wife. Slowly, erotically, disturbingly, she seduces him beside his dozing spouse. Finally the wife wakes up: "What the—what's going on here?" *Whoosh!* The wife's throat is slashed ear to ear by Lilith's talonlike fingernails, and the lovemakers continue to writhe beneath a thick shower of her spurting blood. The demoness then sinks her nails into the publisher's heart, drawing his life's blood out in orgasmic delight. And this is just the *beginning*.

The next day, assistant publisher Karen (*Trilogy of Terror*) Black takes over the reins of the magazine, and at a posh party introduces her sexy but pure sister (Debra Feuer of *To Live and Die in L.A.*) to *Siren*'s playboy art director (Linden Ashby), who's been having his own nocturnal premonitions of Lilith's deadly deeds. When the dazzling demoness crashes the party, everyone falls under her spell except Ashby and Feuer, and thus the conflict between good and evil is established.

As the days follow, more staffers at *Siren* are offed. Even Karen Black is kinkily

Another unsatisfied customer of Lilith's fury.

REVIEW

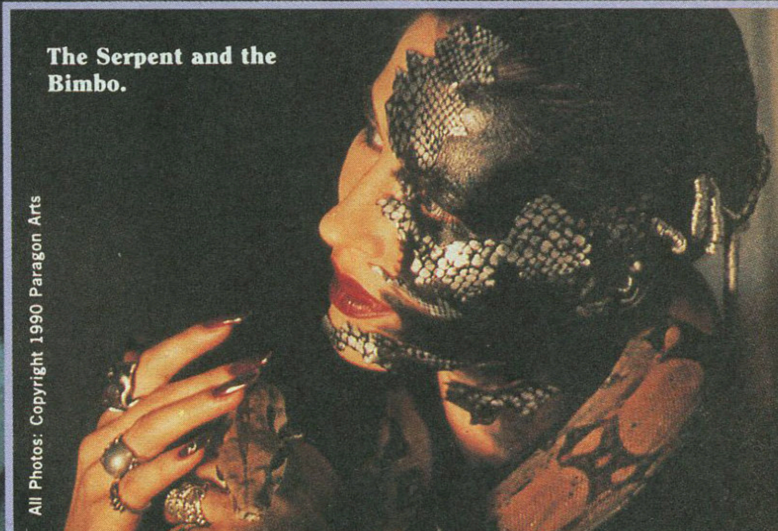
***Deliver Us From Evil*'s actresses really know how to get inside their leading men's heads.**

Lilith strikes a threatening pose to ward off anybody from tampering with the movie's wetter scenes.

seduced and eventually rots away. Everyone at the magazine mutates into sex zombies except Ashby and Feuer, who are too busy doing their own horizontal dancing to notice...until it's too late.

In a last desperate attempt to lure Ashby into her unholy life of eternal pleasure, Lilith traps him in an "orgy from hell" where there's no escape from hideous, horny, copulating demons. The scene is so brazenly bizarre and deranged that nothing yet seen on the screen even comes close. Still, failing to entice the art director, she possesses his nerdy friend (Doug Jones) to lure Ashby into battle. The demoness reveals herself as the truly grotesque, giant bat-winged abomination (courtesy of KNB EFX Group) she really is. There's a climactic war for possession of his soul and the souls of everyone on Earth.

This one's got to be seen to be believed—an erotic horror movie that actually works! Pray that *Deliver Us From Evil* gets released soon—and without edits.



The Serpent and the Bimbo.

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PROFILE

DEFORMED TWINS SURVIVE HOTEL FALL!

The Inside Story

By TIM FERRANTE

> **"Duane is trying to recover himself...He wants so badly to be normal and never can be."**

Kevin VanHentenryck is a man whose past hails from the land of Madonna, automobiles and a shitload of lakes—yes, the state of Michigan, more specifically, Oak Park. It was a sinister twist of fate that landed VanHentenryck his first acting role. Little did the then 10th-grade snotnose realize it would spark his thespian desires! "I was playing my Ozzy Osborne records in reverse, and so help me, Satan himself gurgled that acting in horror movies would make me rich and famous!" cries the *Basket Case* star. Awright, awright. That's not exactly what he said, so before you run to Dad begging for money to buy heavy metal albums, here's the facts, Friday.

"When I was in 10th grade, there was a girl I really wanted to get to know, and one day I overheard her talking about the school plays and how she acted in them," VanHentenryck begins. "I got a bit part somehow, and from that moment on I was hooked. Up until that point, I hadn't thought about acting. My interests were only in art classes. My uncle was a performer in radio, television and movies, and his wife had a role in a soap opera for many years. Anyway, acting wasn't something I considered. And I never did go out with that girl!" he laughs. "After that, I started getting lead roles. I did everything from *Death Takes a Holiday* to *South Pacific*."

The multifaceted Van Hentenryck found additional thrills in a very specific form of motorcycle racing called Observed Field Trials, a European-inspired

Together again! The fabulous Bradley boys return in *Basket Case 2*.

This time out, VanHentenryck also gets to fill in for Belial. (The original actor has since retired.)

The popular commode motif is struck yet again in the long-awaited sequel.

Photos: Sean McCloud/Copyright 1990 SGE

sport based on skill rather than speed. "I was attending the Academy of Dramatic Art in Rochester, Michigan, and I was riding my bike between home and school," he goes on. "One day, I stopped off at a gravel pit and noticed that the road was closed, but I thought nothing of it. I spent about half an hour riding around, and on my way out, another cyclist rode past me. It appeared as if he had come from a hilly road that veered off to the right, so I rode up it, turning back to look at him, and when I turned front again, I saw that this road was not a hill—there was a five-story drop off the other side! I had just enough time to stand and slam on the brakes as I went over the edge. I broke both ankles badly and my jaw. I was laid up for almost a year," VanHentenryck winces.

Now confident in his grasp on the laws of gravity, Van Hentenryck moved to New York City to study at the American Academy of Dramatic Art on Madison Avenue. "Acting and the rigors of finding work, especially at a young age, are very tough, and I began to get disenchanted. During this time, I went to see Ken Russell's *The Savage Messiah*, a film about sculptor Henri Gaudier," he recounts. "There is a moment in the movie where hands are shown carving a piece of marble. I came out of the theater so turned on by that, turned on by the idea of carving stone. I bought some tools, hiked over to the West Side Highway and started banging away. People talk of revelations—it was that kind of feeling. I knew it was something I was *meant* to do," the actor asserts, confirming his love for the art. Amazingly, VanHentenryck has never taken a class on the subject.

It was through a friend at the American Academy that VanHentenryck's fate-filled introduction to Frank Henenlotter took place. At the time, Henenlotter was honing his cinematic craft, making shorter than feature-length subjects. "I did a few small roles for him during this time, and one day he called with the idea that became *Basket Case* and asked if I was interested. I had pretty much given up the idea of theater to concentrate on sculpture. But I loved the script," VanHentenryck enthuses. "It was one of those things that I didn't dare turn down." Smart move, fella.

Producer Edgar Ievins recalls those early promises made to the cast and crew who helped create one of our favorite bloodbaths. "We promised Kevin and company a miserable slog, promised to take up most of their free time for the next year or so, no pay in exchange for complete and professional dedication, and they went along with it," Ievins delights. "Absolute honesty, right up front. But most of the people who worked on it had known Frank. Let's face it, it was 'square one' for all of us."

"My overall impression about working on the film was working with two extremely talented people," VanHentenryck praises. "They were dirt poor, working with nothing and producing amazing things with it. Edgar had a van, and if they needed a door, he'd go out and find one on the street somewhere. They built the set themselves.

Yep, that Duane always stands out in a crowd.

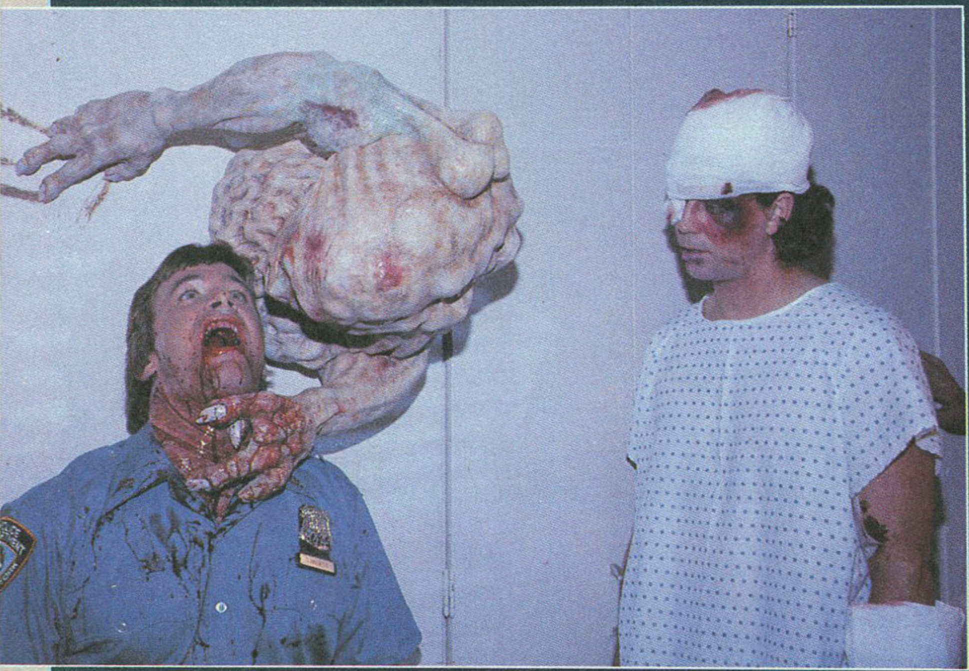
"The hotel was made up of several places. The rooms were constructed in a loft on 17th Street. The staircase was in another location in SoHo. The lobby was elsewhere, and when it was all cut together it looked like one location.

We did try once to shoot in an actual location near Madison Square Garden," the actor recalls. "But the homeless were a tremendous problem. One threatened to steal cables if we didn't buy him a bottle, and the guy next to him promised to *protect* the cables if we bought him a bottle! I don't think anything we shot there ended up in the film."

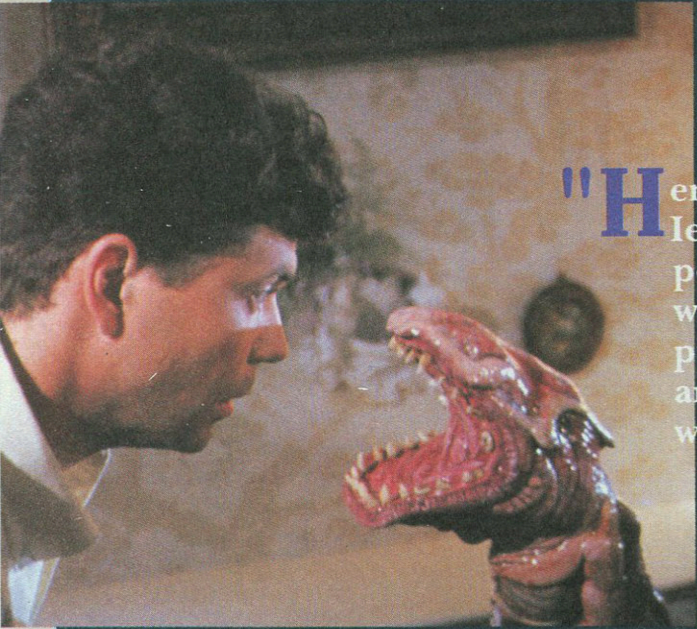
"All of the hotel rooms were the same set," Ievins reveals. "When we were through filming in the rooms, we turned the walls around and that's what became the hallway. Since there weren't enough flats, we had to supplement them with canvas. If you look closely, you can sometimes see the walls billow a little bit."

Easily one of *Basket Case*'s most chilling scenes is the death (or so we were then led to believe) of Belial and Duane. Again Henenlotter and Ievins used the easiest, cheapest path to get the job done. The hotel exterior was actually VanHentenryck's studio apartment on Hubert Street in Manhattan's Tribeca section. "They went to the expense of having the neon sign made," VanHentenryck smiles. "Edgar made a harness for me to hang from. They drove his van onto the sidewalk and built a platform on top of that which enabled us to reach the fire escape. Tribeca was generally pretty quiet, but there was a huge crowd around watching me hang from this sign off the fire escape."

"The close-ups for that scene were shot indoors," Ievins recollects. "We used rear-screen projection, and there was a point where Kevin actually fainted while filming! It added a bit of realism, I'd say."



The brothers try the old "good cop/bad cop" routine on one of the city's finest.



> "Henenlotter and Ievins were dirt poor, working with nothing and producing amazing things with it."

Maybe Duane ought to be more reluctant about sticking his face so close to fleshy, toothsome mutants.

One gratifying payoff for VanHentenryck was attending a midnight showing of *Basket Case* at the legendary Waverly Theater. "The audience was funnier than the film," the actor chuckles. "They had comeback lines for everything. I couldn't believe that people were as into it as they were. See, in the process of making it, fixing old lights that wouldn't work and everything else, I never thought we'd even finish the picture, let alone get it distributed. But it is a testament to the dedication and hard work that Frank and Edgar put into it."

It would be more than six years before Henenlotter and Ievins would make another feature film, and VanHentenryck devoted himself to Big Apple survival and stone sculpting. Not until the production wheels of *Brain Damage* began to turn was VanHentenryck called for a cameo reprise as Duane Bradley.

After years of turning down offers to make a *Basket Case 2*, Henenlotter tipped us off that Duane and Belial were indeed still alive! "Frank liked the idea of Duane and his basket bumping into Rick and his parasite in *Brain Damage*. It was only a one-day job for me. The subway car where we met was ours for a few short hours. Frank did 35 camera setups in the brief period.

"I'm not really 'in' *Brain Damage*," VanHentenryck decides. "At one point, the two stories cross, but that's all. It was a very small part, and I was pleasantly surprised when Frank asked me to do it."

A lucrative deal with Shapiro Glickenhaus funded a return to film production in a big way for the Henenlotter/Ievins duo. We'll probably never know what button the company pushed to convince Henenlotter to script the long-resisted project, but VanHentenryck was most certainly an integral part of the proposed sequel. "Frank called and explained that a sequel was a real possibility and needed to know if I was interested, which I was, before he sat and wrote the script. He warned me not to cut my hair, so when it all came together, my hair was pretty much the needed length.

"The story is quite intense," he stresses. "There was no room to play it funny or tongue-in-cheek. Duane is trying to recover himself. He's very much a classic hero, struggling against insurmountable odds. He wants so badly to be normal and never can be."

Even the stellar likes of VanHentenryck could not escape the dreaded goo of head casts and the astounding workmanship of FX magician Gabe Bartalos (GOREZONE #12). "I was thrilled to know Gabe would be working on it. Since Belial has my face, it meant more head casts. But then I saw what was being done with Belial! It is so much more realistic," he boasts. "It's more of a living creature.

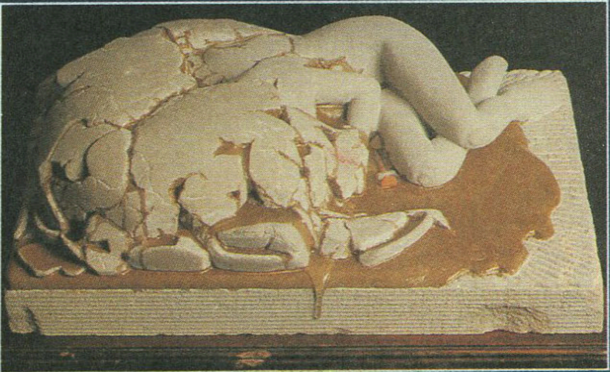
"One of my favorite scenes in the first film is when I pull Belial out of the toilet bowl. While I like the scene, I always wince at the end of it because when I pick him up, the hand just sticks out in the air. It isn't articulated. Now his arms, eyes, face—*everything* moves. He's in much better form now than ever," he warns. "I should point out that this film is not a sequel but a continuation. It's like life: Things go on. It isn't just more of Duane and Belial killing doctors. The next picture may see him going on the road, but I can't really say more than that."

Soon the jury will be called in to cast a verdict on what appears to be a new Frank Henenlotter masterwork. After the rather jerky stop-and-go motion of his acting career, does Kevin VanHentenryck detect the sweet smell of success nearing? "Being a star doesn't really concern me at all," the performer genuinely states. "What I would really like to do is a *lot* of film work. I love acting. I'm good at it; I was trained at it. I'd like to do different parts, stretch myself and do character roles. Even do a Western."

With a proposed *Basket Case 3* now getting serious consideration, it's becoming more apparent that VanHentenryck's initial suspicions about Henenlotter and Ievins were well founded. "When I first met Frank, my impression was that he one day would be a famous movie director," VanHentenryck reveals. "He knows so much about films and filmmaking, more than anyone I know. I used to come up with what I believed to be the most obscure films, and he'd just launch into a story about the production or anecdotes about differently cut versions. He's very serious about the films he enjoys. I trust Frank and Edgar." ✹

Photo: Courtesy Frank Henenlotter

This famous sequence was actually lensed outside VanHentenryck's NYC apartment!

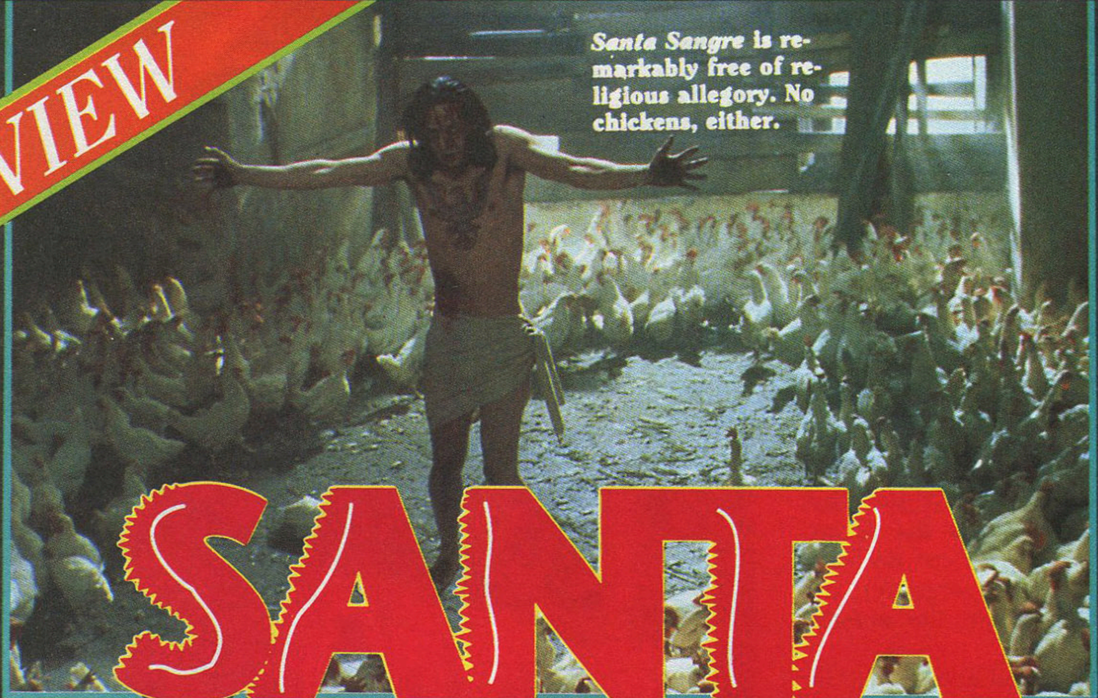


Art: Kevin VanHentenryck

***A* sample of VanHentenryck's sculpture, to which the actor now devotes himself fulltime.**

> "The *Basket Case* audience was funnier than the film. They had comeback lines for everything."

PREVIEW



Santa Sangre is remarkably free of religious allegory. No chickens, either.

SANTA SANGRE is Coming to Town

"There are only so many ways to shoot a murder. I wanted to shoot one, but the one."

By **STEPHEN R. BISSETTE**

Before *Pink Flamingos*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Eraserhead* and *Basket Case*, before the rise and fall of the midnight movie phenomena of the 1970s, there was a blood-spattered allegorical religious Western that was considered "too heavy" to be shown except at midnight.

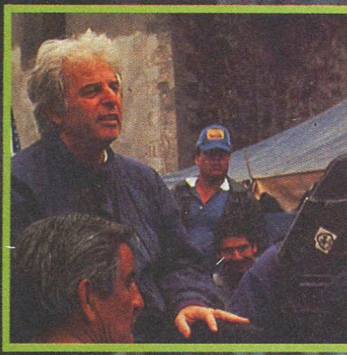
The film was *El Topo*. It surfaced at New York City's Elgin Theater December 18, 1970 and ran seven nights a week until the end of June 1971, the first midnight movie. Here were piggyback gunslingers—a sharpshooter with no legs riding a man with no arms; a depraved town whose church services involve ritualized Russian roulette; a hollow mountain filled with human freaks trying to dig their way out of the caverns. At the center of it all was El Topo, a leather-clad gunman who seemed to have ridden out of Sergio Leone's spaghetti Westerns and into a sun-bleached netherworld suggesting a hallucinatory merger of Tod Browning, Luis Bunuel and Federico Fellini.

And there was blood: splashes, fountains, *rivers* of blood.

The creator—star, producer, director, writer, composer—of *El Topo* was Alejandro (also spelled Alexandro; "Jodo," to his friends) Jodorowsky. Born in Chile to Russian Jewish parents, he studied theater before moving to Paris to work with mime Marcel Marceau. During this period, Jodorowsky

directed his first film, a mime adaptation of Thomas Mann's *The Transposed Heads* (1959). Jodorowsky later collaborated with Spanish playwright Fernando Arrabal and writer/artist Roland Topor (author of *The Tenant* and designer of *Fantastic Planet*) to create the Panic Movement, expanding upon the concepts of Antonin Artaud's notorious Theatre of Cruelty to create "bloody and inhuman" spectacles to provoke, outrage and transform their audiences. Jodorowsky filmed Arrabal's play *Fando and Lis* (1968), stirring scandal and riots; it was banned in Mexico and shorn of almost 30 minutes for its meager U.S. release. *El Topo* was Jodorowsky's next film, also produced and filmed in Mexico, as was his subsequent feature, *The Holy Mountain* (1972).

His ambitious adaptation of Frank Herbert's *Dune* was announced in 1974 as a French/American co-production.



Director Alejandro Jodorowsky became a cult legend with *El Topo*.

What? It's noon already, and the maid still hasn't cleaned this room?

The tattoo lady gets edited.

One of *Santa Sangre*'s highlights is an old-fashioned Texas-style bread 'n' mud wrestling match.

All Photos: Copyright 1989 Expanded Entertainment

After spending over two years and $2 million on the project, and mobilizing the considerable talents of artists H.R. Giger, Chris Foss and Jean "Moebius" Giraud, the American financiers pulled out and the rights were snapped up by Dino De Laurentiis. Discouraged, Jodorowsky stayed in Paris and began to collaborate with Moebius on comic stories (beginning with "Eyes of the Cat," currently reprinted and translated in *Taboo* #4) and graphic novels.

Salvation arrived via producer Claudio Argento, collaborating producer of his brother Dario's films *Deep Red*, *Suspiria*, *Inferno*, *Tenebrae* and George Romero's classic *Dawn of the Dead.* Argento broke business relations with Dario in 1984, and began independently producing features like *Little Flames* (1985) and *Distant Lights* (1987). Argento and Jodorowsky have known each other for nine years, and *Santa Sangre* is the first fruit of their relationship.

Santa Sangre translates as "Holy Blood," and blood—with all its religious, familial and horrific connotations—is central to the film itself. The director's own sons, Adan and Axel Jodorowsky, star as Fenix, who as an 8-year-old boy (played by Adan) lives and performs in Mexico City's Circus of the Gringo. His drunken, womanizing brute of a father, Orgo (Guy Stockwell), is the circus knife-thrower; his mother Concha (Blanca Guerra) is a trapeze artist and religious fanatic. Concha is obsessed with a young virgin who retained her purity after being attacked by rapists who cut off her arms and left her to bleed to death. The mother deifies the victim as an image saint, Santa Sangre. When Concha catches her adulterous husband in bed with the tattooed woman (Thelma Tixou), she flings acid into his face and groin, sharing her patroness' fate when the enraged, maimed Orgo severs her arms before cutting his own throat.

Young Fenix sees it all.

Fenix is committed to a mental asylum until, at the age of 20 (played by Axel Jodorowsky), he sees the tattooed woman during a nighttime excursion with the other inmates. The next morning, his mother appears outside his window, and he escapes to join her. They begin to perform a bizarre mother-and-son stage act with Fenix serving as his mother's arms, a relationship that forces Fenix to be Concha's hands in countless acts of bloody vengeance. The tattooed woman is first to go, as Fenix helplessly obeys his mother's twisted will.

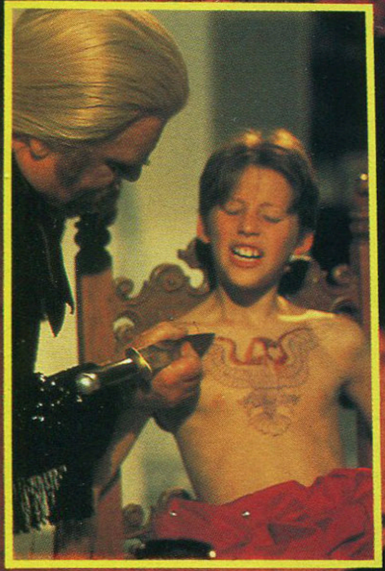
Santa Sangre stands apart from Jodorowsky's earlier cult classics in that the story is more traditionally accessible than his previous works. While viewers unfamiliar with Jodorowsky's films may embrace *Santa Sangre* as evidence of fresh blood from a "new" visionary director, *El Topo* aficionados will delight in the intoxicating intensity and delirious, exhilarating imagery characteristic of all Jodorowsky's accomplishments in theater, comics and cinema. It is by turns dazzling, moving, horrifying and hilarious, easily the richest and most original (despite its derivative finale) horror film this year. Expanded Entertainment will soon begin releasing *Santa Sangre* to selected big city theaters in America.

Jean Giraud has called Jodorowsky "a professional dreamer," and it is true. At age 60, he is still a fiery, passionate creator. It is on the screen in *Santa Sangre*, and in person his speech can barely keep up with the torrent of images and emotions that flow from his imagination. As I met "Jodo" and Claudio Argento this past September, they were just leaving the Boston Film Festival's morning showing of the rarely screened 1937 Jewish horror film, *The Dybbuk*. Argento, ever the gentleman, seemed introspective and reserved, while Jodorowsky was excitedly juggling the possibilities *The Dybbuk* suggested to him.

GOREZONE: Where did the idea for *Santa Sangre* come from?

Alejandro Jodorowsky: There was a criminal in Mexico, Jorje Cardona, a very famous case. There was a producer in Mexico named Gustave Alatriste, who produced Luis Bunuel's *Viridiana* and *The Exterminating Angel*, and one day he said to me, "Listen, Alejandro, you are wasting your time with artistic pictures. You'll never make money. Now listen, you have no money, *I* have money. I will produce you." I said OK. He said, "We'll make a picture, two-week shoot, 10-day shoot, very quickly. Don't think about quality, don't think about nothing, we'll make a story about criminals. For every film you make for me, I'll give you—" something like $5,000. "But you need to write one in three days [*laughs*]. You can do one a month. We'll make a contract for 12 pictures. You'll make $5,000 to do it, $5,000 per script, $10,000 a month. You have no money, it will be good for you." I said, "OK, I will write about Jorje Cardona, the famous criminal," and then I

Kids, let this be a warning to you: If you sneak out and get a tattoo without permission, your parents might make you give it back.



"I went crazy and wanted to put red butterflies flying from the wound."
—Alejandro Jodorowsky, director

The rare but deadly carnivorous rooster travels in packs and takes no prisoners.

went with a rage, with a big *hate*, and I wrote the most surrealistic script I ever wrote in my life!

Claudio Argento: This is what I read that time, the first script.

Jodo: On the table, he paid me $5,000. He had the money there, near me. And I looked at the money, and I wrote the worst surrealistic story, but I made it an opera. He was killing a pregnant woman with the fetus, and a lot of things. And I came to Alatriste with that project, and he said, "Keep the money, you are impossible! I don't want to do *that*! Keep the story, keep everything, don't come to see me again in your life!" [*Laughs*] I never told you that?

Argento: No!

Jodo: Steve is not a journalist, so I'll tell you the truth, no? And then I had this history, I tried to turn it into a comic book, working with [French artist] Nicolette. He had a crisis when he read that, and decided not to draw any more comics. He switched to illustrations. He tried to do my story, but it was very rough. And then I showed it to Claudio—

Argento: And I was terrified, exactly like Alatriste [*laughs*]! But I found inside that script the real picture we could make as good as possible, something we could do.

Jodo: In the beginning, the father threw the acid in the mother's face, and she was deformed. She had seven masks, every mask in another expression. When she was happy, she wore the happy mask; when she was angry, she wore the angry mask.

Argento: You never saw her real face.

Jodo: And she was a dwarf, the mother.

Argento: So I put my hand in, pulled out the ideas, and wrote—not a *normal* screenplay, it wasn't so normal, but a screenplay you could show someone. And so we wrote, I think, five or six different versions in seven years.

Jodo: Always he said, "We can never do it." One day I said to him, "Listen, Claudio, we need to go and make this." And we went and did it, but he was terrified. I would say to him what I needed, and there would be a big battle—

Argento: A respectful battle.

Jodo: Normal battles. We came to that because he needed to be convinced I was not making a narcissistic thing, that it was for the picture. This is how we made it.

Argento: A year and a half ago, I decided to produce it—by myself, independently, since for years I had tried to involve someone. They were all terrified, even by this new version, which was very clear, with nothing surrealistic or difficult to understand. Everybody was *still* terrified.

GZ: What were they terrified of?

Jodo: The story!

Argento: No, of Alejandro. Because they understood the story, and even *liked* it, but they'd always think: "How is Jodorowsky going to make this thing? Maybe it will be different from what is written here." They were too tough to convince. I tried for years and years and then said, "Stop. Let's make it. We will *show* exactly what we're going to do." That's the story.

GZ: There are many references to horror movies in the film, like *The Invisible Man*...

Jodo: *Mandrake the Magician*, which is not horror, but the dwarf

"So we wrote—not a *normal* screenplay, it wasn't so normal, but a screenplay you could show someone."
—Claudio Argento, producer

assistant is like a little Lothar. Also *The Hands of Orlac*, *Psycho*, and *Night of the Living Dead*, with the graveyard scene.

GZ: Did you ever see the Lon Chaney film *The Unknown*? There is the circus setting. Joan Crawford plays a woman who can't bear to be touched, and Lon Chaney has his arms cut off.

Jodo: I just saw that for the first time a week ago! You could also say *Freaks*. I'm sure there are more, I just can't think of them right now. Also *El Topo*, when the father is naked and kills himself, as does the General in *El Topo*.

GZ: *Santa Sangre* is bathed in blood, but it isn't at all like *El Topo* or *The Holy Mountain*, where people "bled" birds and vegetables.

Jodo: I didn't want that here. I wanted to awaken the emotions. In one incident near the end, I went crazy and wanted to put butterflies, red butterflies, flying from the wound when he kills La Santa, the big woman. But when they brought in the butterflies, they were dead, and they were white butterflies. I could not do it! That was much better, because I preferred more realistic deaths.

GZ: The stabbing of the tattooed woman is so horrific. It reminded me of some of the murder sequences in Dario Argento's films.

Jodo: Well, it was a murder. There are only so many ways to shoot a murder. I wanted to shoot one, but *the* one. In *Aesop's Fables*, the one about the Lion and the King, all the animals are there waiting, and one lion comes. And the fox says, "Only *one* lion?" The lion says, "Only one, but I *am* a lion." So I say, I am making a crime picture. I will shoot *only* one murder, but it will be very strong. In that way, the next crime will frighten you. What can we do now? When the woman is stabbed during the knife-throwing scene, there are eight frames of the knife going in; this cost me one day of shooting, for eight frames! It was very difficult.

GZ: It also made the graveyard scene more shocking, because you didn't realize how *many* women he'd killed up to that point. There are 20 or—

Jodo: The real murderer had killed 30 women, and put them in his garden.

GZ: There is also an eerie beauty to the scenes of Fenix playing the piano with his mother, very surreal, and very funny in their way.

Argento: This is what I personally like best. I noticed you laughing that way. You're right, it's some strange situation, it's not normal life! It's a strange life, and you laugh in a different way.

GZ: Are you worried about dealing with the MPAA?

Argento: A little bit, but what happened in England makes me happy. Maybe the same thing will happen here. England is very strict, but they liked the film. They found some moral, some alibi.

Jodo: Fantastic! England is the worst, the worst in the world, worse than France, even, when it comes to censorship, but they will play it without cutting it!

GZ: There was one scene that reminded me of the Mexican wrestling horror movies. The sequence with the "super woman" and all the masked wrestlers reminded me of Santo—

Jodo: Yes! The name of the wrestling woman is La Santa, Santo as a woman. It is intended!

GZ: Wasn't your executive producer, Rene Cardona Jr., involved with those films?

Argento: His *father* was. He died recently.

GZ: Do you two plan on doing another film together?

Argento and Jodo: Sure!

Jodo: He never asked me, but I have here the script for *Sons of El Topo*. I want to do that, with my sons. But I will see, because it all depends on what kind of money *Santa Sangre* catches. If it makes a lot of money, maybe another film I will do. It depends on my validity, and it depends also on if Claudio wants to go with me. He'd be crazy if he doesn't go along with me!

GZ: Would you make another horror or crime film?

(continued on page 65)

FICTION

(continued from page 18)

He stumbled back and discovered that he, like the grinning rictus before him, moved as though through molasses. He batted one hand instinctively at the probing tongue. It lashed itself wetly around his arm, coiling like oozing rope, and pulled at him. The mouth loomed, suddenly and terrifyingly, around his arm, black filed teeth poised to rip at his flesh. He heard himself screaming. With a conscious effort, he forced his finger around the trigger.

The concussion of his automatic shattered the weird spell. He fired again and again at the grinning rictus, saw each terrible explosion tear away a portion of the woman-thing's slender body. Seven times he triggered the weapon; on the eighth, his gun clicked impotent, and the nightmare mouth smiled crazily and pulled his arm between the gaping jaws.

Cordite thunder splintered the night an eighth time, and Kay saw the grinning jaws go slack, the woman-thing stumble forward from an impact. She half-turned, and another bullet etched lightning across the small clearing. Where Kay's bullets had torn great wounds in the woman without visible effect, these two shots penetrated cleanly, almost surgically, and lodged in her left chest.

She tottered absurdly on one leg, reached to grab Kay's extended arm. He felt the coldness of her flesh against his, the rough, alien iciness of her. Then her grip failed, and she slid to the cold lamplit pavement.

"Damn," Kay Crecelius muttered, wide-eyed.

"Are you OK?" Arkady was at his side, pulling him away from the grotesque corpse. Kay rubbed his arm, where the thing's rough tongue had left deep abrasions, and nodded. "D-did you shoot it?"

Arkady arched an eyebrow, stood up straight. "No," he said toward the thick brush, "I think you have Dr. Makarov to thank for that." Arkady half-smiled, without warmth, as the older man emerged from the dark hedge. "Or should I say Colonel Makarov?"

The Russian snapped the bolt action of his pistol, studiously nonchalant. "You are perceptive, Lieutenant Velich."

Kay's eye flitted from the corpse to Arkady to the old Russian, back to his partner. "You mean this guy's Russian Army?"

Arkady shook his head once. "No. KGB."

Kay pointed at the corpse. "And who the hell's that? Brezhnev?"

"That, dear boy," Makarov began, smiling, "is rather a more involved story."

Arkady looked at the thing, impassive. "That is a *vedmagdiavol*, the 'devil's witch.' If I'm pronouncing it correctly."

"Close enough," the old Russian grinned. "And Lieutenant Velich is *vedmachasovoj*, a watcher of witches. A Sentry. So his family has been since the time of the czars."

> **When the slender girl suddenly lunged at him like a wild thing, it seemed as though she were barely moving at all.**

Kay Crecelius pursed his lips, a pained look on his face. "What?"

"The *vedma*, or witches, and their brethren warlocks the *mag* have preyed upon the Soviet people for a millenia. Once, they killed with impunity, before our fathers learned of the witches' vulnerability to cold-forged iron. With weapons of iron, men slew their physical bodies, drove their wicked undying souls back to hell. Certain clans were appointed Sentries, to await the demons' return to this world. Such Sentries were charged to slay the *vedmagdiavol* at the moment of their manifestation on this world, while still they retained their hellish form—before they could kill a mortal; for what a devil's witch kills, it can become."

Kay's eyes were wide with disbelief. Arkady scratched his forehead. "My grandmother was a Sentry. She brought us here to America when she sensed the next advent of the demons would be here. She waited, and when she died my father waited, and before he died he passed the lore on to me." Arkady shrugged. "I thought it was lunacy, of course, but in his last days it meant much to him for me to sit and listen, so I humored him. He was my father. I found out he was telling the truth, after all."

"But why here?" Kay asked. "And why so long after—"

"After grandmother predicted? Who knows. There is no logic to the return of the witches. They may not return again for a thousand years; they may try to cross tomorrow. They come when—and where—*they* feel they can win. Perhaps they feared my grandmother, and my father. They had reason to. Because I didn't believe, perhaps they felt against me they could succeed. If they kill even once, and take on human form, they are virtually invincible.

"All I know is that I felt them coming, as my father had told me I would. All six of them, three warlocks, three witches." He half-smiled again, turned to the hardened Russian. "I only regret being so nearsighted when it came to killing them. My ancestors slew them with cold iron swords; all I could find was this damned messy iron rod. It never occurred to me to forge iron bullets for my gun."

"My employers are...resourceful men," Makarov grinned. "This is the last one, then? And none of them claimed a victim?"

Velich nodded. "This one is the last. And none of them killed."

The gray-templed Soviet holstered his weapon. "You've done the State a service, Velich. Once these shape-shifters gain a new face, they can effect unknowable wickedness. Your history books will confirm that readily enough. Read about Rasputin sometime."

Kay shook his head. "Arkady, we still have a problem. I mean, I've seen this thing, I've blown it apart at pointblank range and watched it keep coming, and I'm

(continued on page 51)

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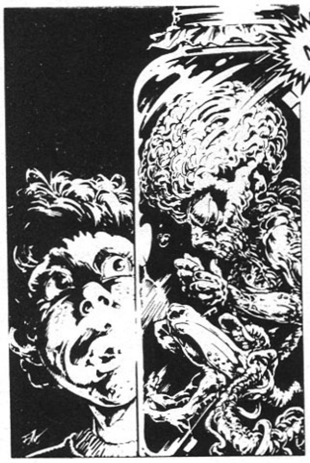

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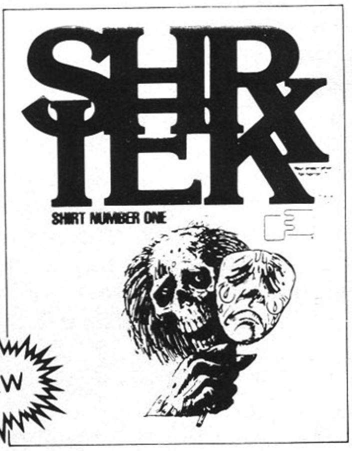

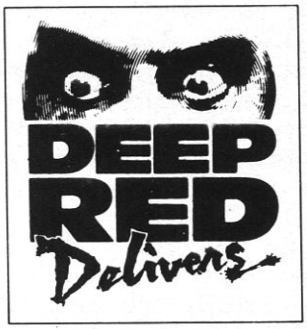

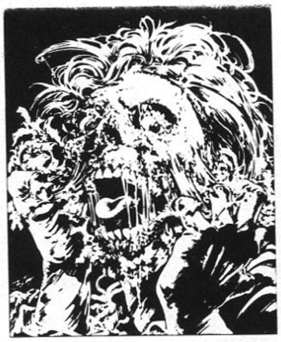

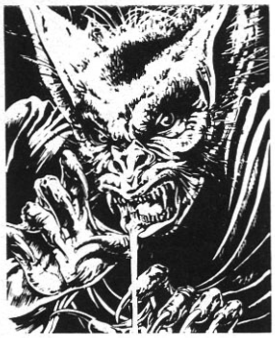

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PIECE O' MIND

by Chas. Balun

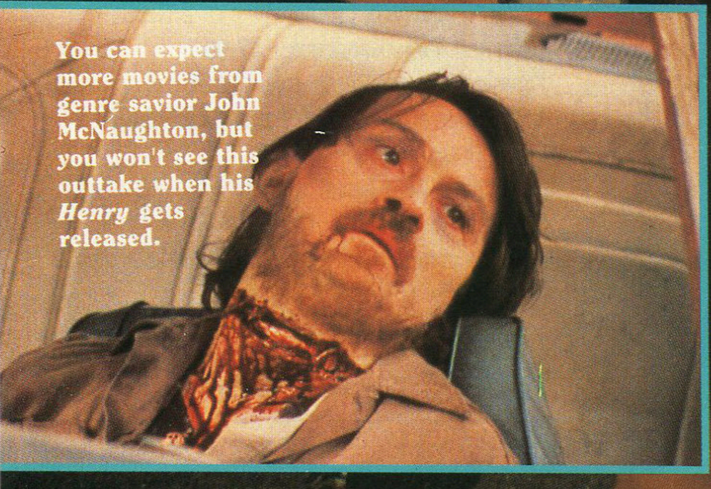
The Beast and the Least of the 1980s

The only thing worse than the thought of another horror comedy like *Return of the Living Dead Part II* would be a horror romance.

Photo: Lynn Mcafee

In the last decade, more people tuned into David Cronenberg than ever before, and few were disappointed.

Photo: Copyright 1982 Universal City Studios



You can expect more movies from genre savior John McNaughton, but you won't see this outtake when his *Henry* gets released.

Photo: Copyright MPI

I fear for the future of the horror film. The '80s have ended with a whimper (emphasis on the first syllable), and the genre is in retreat. What was once robust, swaggering, cocksure and courageous is now predictable, patronizing, commercial and constipated. The genre needs a Black and Decker enema and a speedy return to the A-B-Cs of fear and loathing.

The early '80s was an exciting time for genre fanciers. You could see nearly every horror release on the big screen and, in many cases, complete and uncut. Serious splatter fare like *Make Them Die Slowly*, *Maniac*, *Nightmare*, *Shogun Assassin*, *Zombie* and *Gates of Hell* splashed across screens from coast to coast. Even the really cheap, dumbshit quickies like *The Boogens*, *Forbidden World*, *Humanoids From the Deep*, *Dawn of the Mummy* or *Burial Ground* were always more fun than a barrel of masked, implement-wielding serial killers.

Sure, it's easy to criticize and hypothesize, assign the blame and expose the transgressors. Much more difficult to remedy the situation and effect real change. But hell, let's try anyway.

Many genre wags have singled out the MPAA, sequelitis, a video glut of B titles and an overemphasis on FX as contributing factors to the Fall of Fear as we know it. Unfortunately, it's just not that simple. And perhaps even those arguments will be rendered moot as a new generation of fans—raised on FANGORIA, GOREZONE, Fulci and fanaticism, weaned on Barker's *Books of Blood*, and jet-fueled by the high energy rock of the Clash or Metallica—becomes the new wave of filmmakers of the '90s. Fortunately, both rock 'n' roll and the horror film belong to tough, resilient genres, ones capable of reinventing themselves, cannibalizing the competition and emerging stronger, wiser and more powerful.

But before we celebrate the Dawn of the New Blood, we must first bury the '80s. So instead of blustery rhetoric, pedantic piddling or film school sermonizing, here then are both the guilty and the gutsy, the pathetic and the perverse—the films and their makers that, for better or worse, have left their bloodied prints on the decade past.

MOST UNWELCOME GENRE TREND

The horror comedy. Easily. Few films can balance fun with fright, but that never deterred the makers of such execrably flaccid fearfests as *Return of the Living Dead Part II*, *C.H.U.D. II*, *Dead Heat* and *April Fool's Day*, who've once again helped prove that "Dying is easy—comedy is hard."

Runners Up: Any film after 1984 featuring more than one dream sequence or more than three FX shops in the credits.

Cronenberg has never made a bad film, and neither has Dario Argento.

CRASH AND BURN AWARD

Indeed, all the nominees have come equipped with some pretty impressive credentials:

John Carpenter: *Escape From New York*, *Big Trouble in Little China*, *Prince of Darkness*, *They Live!*

Tobe Hooper: The list is too painful to repeat.

Joe Dante: *Explorers*, *The 'Burbs*.

All of the filmmakers appearing here were among the movers and shakers when the decade began, yet subsequent work has provoked much consternation and hand-wringing even among their most devoted fans.

The Winner: Wes Craven. A long, long fall from grace after a string of intense, hardcore hits like *Last House on the Left*, *The Hills Have Eyes* and *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. His current film, *Shocker*, is a deranged mess that never recovers from several pitiful, howl-inducing sequences including one featuring a foul-mouthed, limping 7-year-old who operates heavy machinery in a particularly reckless manner after becoming possessed by Craven's latest designer psycho. Awfully hard to believe Craven could possibly make a worse film than either *The Hills Have Eyes, Part 2* or *Deadly Friend*, but *Shocker* undeniably signals a return to the same slag heap from which both those deadly duds were mined.

MOST PROMISING DEBUT

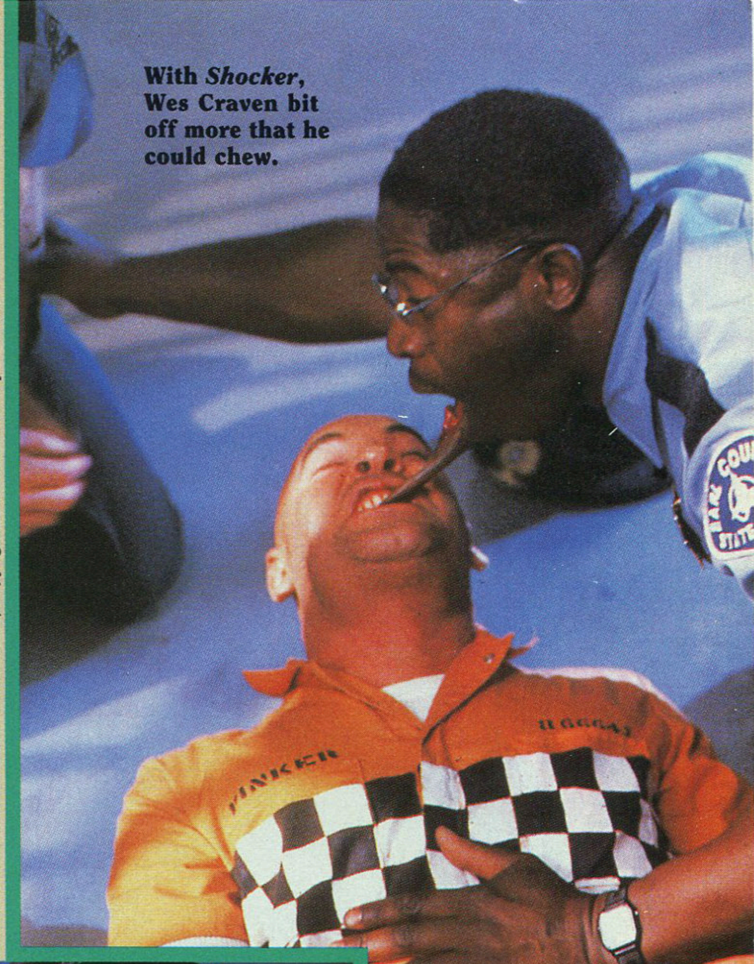
As the high and mighty stumbled then fell around them, fearless first-timers with absolutely nothing to lose and everything to gain hot-wired the genre again and again with films that challenged the very parameters of modern horror. Happily, then, there are absolutely no losers among these troupers.

The Winner: John McNaughton's *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer* is a numbing, paralyzing descent into the soul of a sociopathic killer, done with an uncommon flair and reminiscent of the skewed logic and compressed fury frequently found in the films of Martin Scorsese or John Frankenheimer. *Henry* is lean and mean, presented stylishly yet without compromise, and signals a new directorial vision from a filmmaker who likes his horror straight with no chaser.

Runners Up: Peter Jackson's hilariously meaty splattertoon *Bad Taste*, Clive Barker's uneven yet exhilarating *Hellraiser*, Stuart Gordon's impeccable *Re-Animator* and Jim Muro's gutbusting *Street Trash* were the other winners here. Thanks for helping us all Keep the Faith.

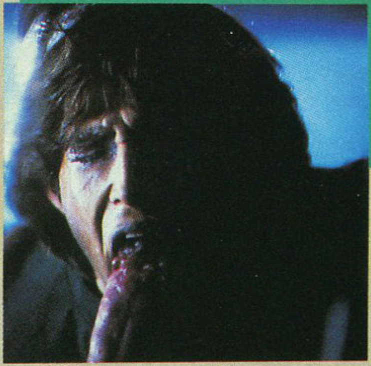
MOST DANGEROUS DIRECTOR

Apparently operating without permits of any kind, fearing nothing and hell-bent for perversity, German director Jorg Buttgereit threatens to bulldoze the genre towards some black, yawning maw, and it's a journey that not everyone will want to make. Buttgereit's *Nekromantik*, an inflamed, running sore of a film, is a bleak, nihilistic scenario filled with repressed rage, vicious, random violence and unspeakable sexual couplings between the living and the dead. Buttgereit's worldview is about as inviting as a kitchen table castration.



With *Shocker*, Wes Craven bit off more that he could chew.

Photo: Peter Iovino/Copyright 1989 Universal City Studios



***Curse II* bites, all right.**

THE K-MART AWARD FOR CHEAP EXCELLENCE

With certifiable genre bombs like *Leviathan* costing close to $20 million these days, it's rather reassuring to note that you can still be terrified and titillated by films costing no more than what *The Blob* remake spent on catering and credit crawls. A toast, mes GoreZonians—Thunderbird straight up in a paper cup to Frank Henenlotter's *Basket Case*, a touching, loving tribute to hereditary mutation and sibling rivalry unparalleled to this day.

MOST APPROPRIATE TITLE

Gee whiz, we've got a three-way tie here, so please hold your applause. Alice Cooper's soporific performance in the aptly named canine crapper *Monster Dog* is flanked by the limp and lame Lovecraft basher *The Unnamable* and the terminally stupid nonsequel *Curse II: The Bite*. Yeah, well, the latter film bites, all right, but not where it should, while the makers of the former shall remain, er...unmentionable.

Photo: Courtesy Frank Henenlotter

***Basket Case* is one low-budget '80s offering that doesn't belong in the toilet.**

BIG MAC AWARD FOR MASS MARKET FAST FOOD HORROR

A tip o' the spatula to Robert Shaye and the short order cooks over at New Line Cinema for turning a surreal, pedophilic crispy critter into the hottest thing this side of Chicken McNuggets. Even with their remarkable, though pernicious, high-profile media blitz, Shaye and the Old Liners should acknowledge their obvious debt to yet another savvy, masterful market analyst: Ronald McDonald. Both camps have been monumentally successful in establishing beachheads for blandness in both dining and entertainment—New Line to the tune of over $200 million in domestic box office for the five *Nightmare* films (aside from the lucrative, multimillion-dollar ancillary markets) while the Burger Bozo boasts of "Over 75 billion served." Yikes!

MOST UNWANTED SEQUELS

Mighty tough to narrow the herd here, but I think you'll agree that *Ghoulies Go to College*, *Silent Night, Deadly Night 3*, *Sleepaway Camp 3* and *The Understudy: Graveyard Shift 2* do not belong in this or any century.

BEST SEQUEL FEATURING FLESH-EATING FLYING FISH THAT SPAWN LIKE GRUNION

James (*Aliens*) Cameron's *Piranha II*. Fins down, man.

SIX FILMS THAT DESERVE A SECOND CHANCE

It is a mystery why such nifty "little" films as *Fade to Black*, *Dead and Buried*, *Night Warning*, *Deadline* (the Canadian splatfest, not the Christopher Walken yawner), *Night Train to Terror* and *The Offspring* were virtually ig-

Photo: Copyright 1988 20th Century Fox

H*enry* is lean and mean, presented stylishly yet without compromise, and signals a new directorial vision.

nored during their initial releases, but here's your chance to right a past wrong. All are available on videocassette. Find them again.

THE LATEX SLINGERS' WET DREAM OF THE DOUBLE DECADE

Though encumbered with a stillborn script, irritatingly self-absorbed characters and a weak-kneed ending, John Carpenter's *The Thing* still serves today as the highwater mark in the art of special makeup FX. Despite the fact that the film is nearly eight years old, only Stan Winston's work in *Aliens* and the Lyle Conway/Tony Gardner collaboration in *The Blob* have even approached the level of artistry and sense of wonder showcased in *The Thing*. Despite a career that has not always been followed as closely as those of his more media-prone colleagues, Rob Bottin has proven time and time again (with *The Howling* and brief but stunning sequences in *Twilight Zone: The Movie*, *Innerspace* and *The Witches of Eastwick*) that he fits easily among the Best of the Best.

DIRECTOR OF THE DECADE

Based upon impressive bodies of work, consistence of vision and adherence to the highest order of craft, this honor belongs to two highly unique, ferociously talented filmmakers—and *neither* of them is homegrown. David Cronenberg has never made a bad film, and neither has Dario Argento. Their "failures" are usually at levels that most genre filmmakers never even aspire to.

Cronenberg's *The Brood*, *Videodrome* and *Dead Ringers* are verifiable masterpieces, and even his lesser works like *Rabid*, *Scanners* and *The Dead Zone* are always thoughtful, absorbing and ofttimes compelling near-misses.

Dario Argento has never received the attention nor adulation due him in the States, and it's an oversight that needs to be rectified, here and now. Due to lazy, indifferent stateside distribution, Argento's films have rarely been seen on the big screen by American audiences. Even when they finally arrive on videocassette, they are usually heavily edited, sometimes shortened by as much as 20 minutes.

Suspiria, one of many Argento classics, was only just released on video, a mere 13 years after its initial theatrical run. Argento has been faithfully toiling in his beloved genre now for over 20 years, yet his films rarely receive the kind of fawning, patronizing media coverage afforded even such disposable genre flotsam as *Friday the 13th, Part VIII*, *The Unholy* or *Critters 2*. Wherefore lies justice?

Even though Argento's output in the '80s has been fairly prolific (*Inferno* ['80], *Tenebrae* ['82], *Phenomena* ['84] and *Opera* ['88]), most fans are still more familiar with his early work like *Bird with the Crystal Plumage* (1970) or *Deep Red* (1976), simply because those are the titles that have been more readily available on videocassette.

While most of Argento's films rarely remain intact when transferred to video (witness wanton desecrations like *Unsane* and *Creepers*), full-length *uncut* versions have been made available on a number of imported Japanese laserdiscs in the last few years. Mine eyes have seen the glory, and believe me, after a full-strength dose of vintage uncut Argento, stuff like *The Lost Boys*, *Spookies* or *House II* makes you wanna barf.

Now comes the tough part.

BEST FILMS OF THE DECADE

This is inevitable, granted, but "best" is not always "favorite," so I've compiled two lists. Thus, I can play both journalist and fan at the same time. As you can see, just because I respect some film doesn't mean I have to *like* it.

THE BEST

Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer (1986) D: John McNaughton

A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984) D: Wes Craven

Re-Animator (1985) D: Stuart Gordon

The Evil Dead (1983) D: Sam Raimi

Dead Ringers (1988) D: David Cronenberg

THE FAVORITES

Bad Taste (1988) D: Peter Jackson

The Howling (1981) D: Joe Dante

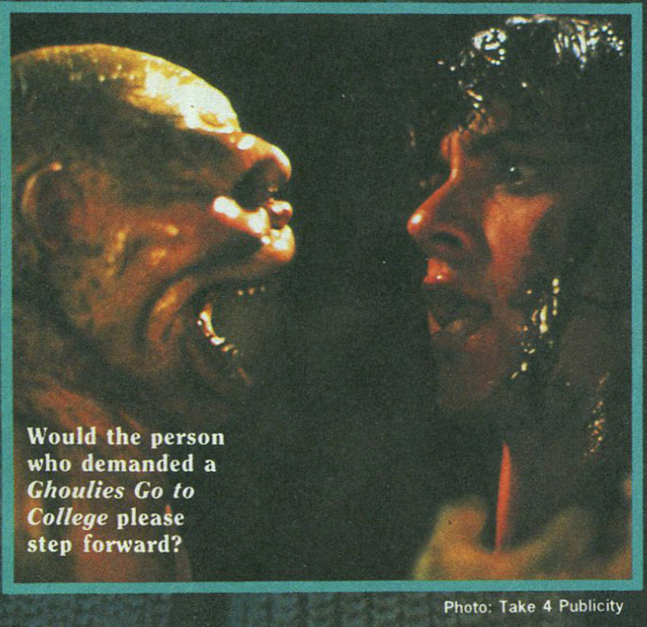
Videodrome (1983) D: David Cronenberg

The Beyond (1981) D: Lucio Fulci

Street Trash (1987) D: Jim Muro

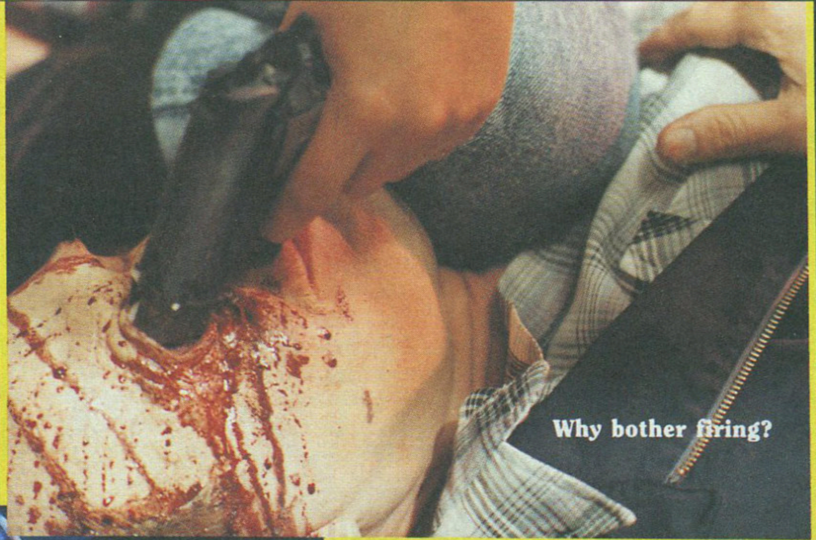
There. The '80s be dead and buried now. I hope to be eaten alive in the '90s.

***Dead Ringers* emerged as Cronenberg's darkest—and perhaps best—achievement to date.**

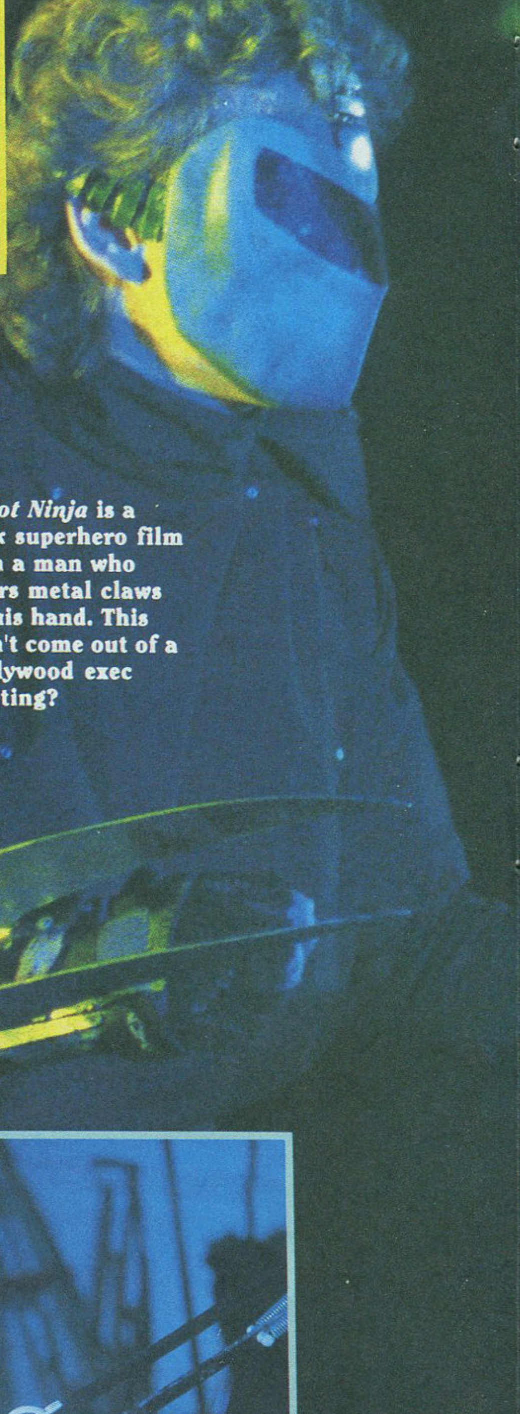


Would the person who demanded a *Ghoulies Go to College* please step forward?

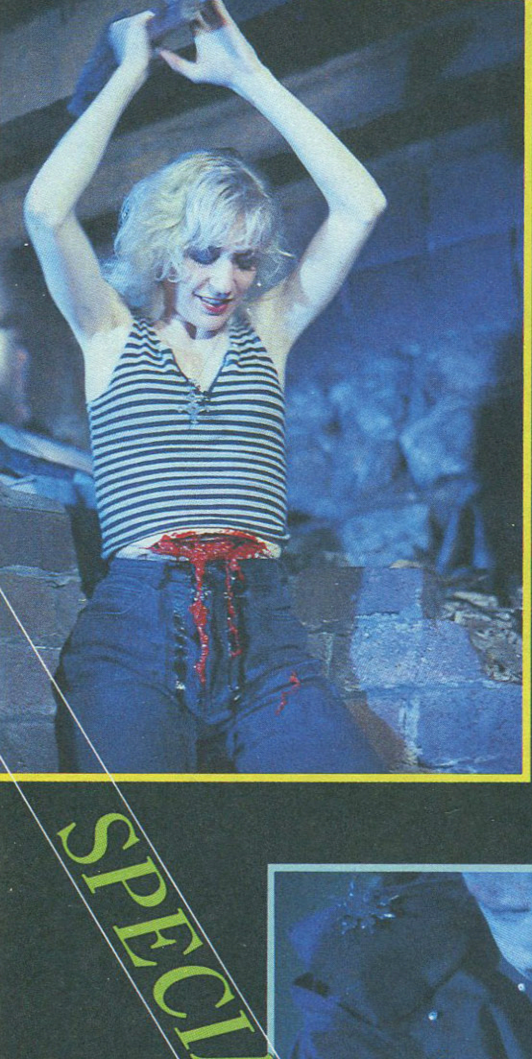
Photo: Take 4 Publicity



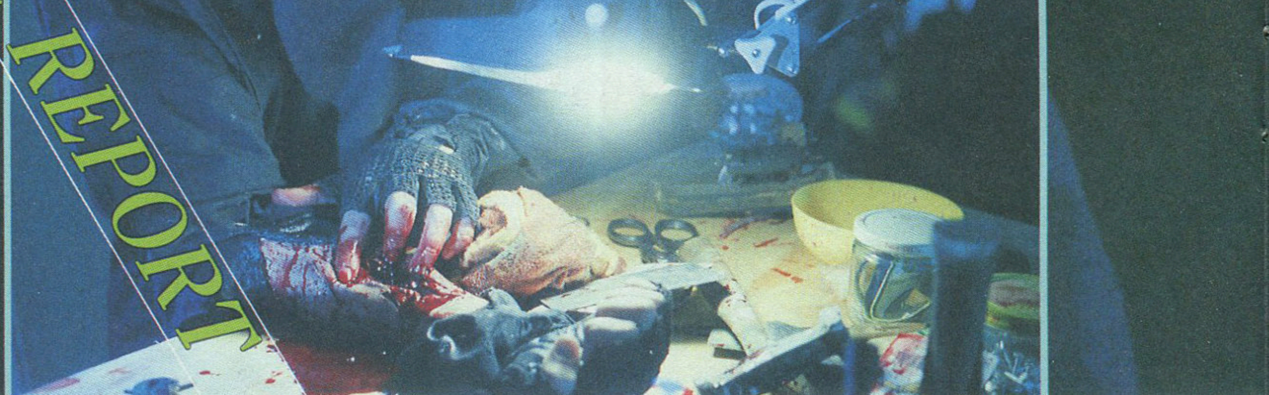
Why bother firing?



Robot Ninja is a dark superhero film with a man who wears metal claws on his hand. This didn't come out of a Hollywood exec meeting?

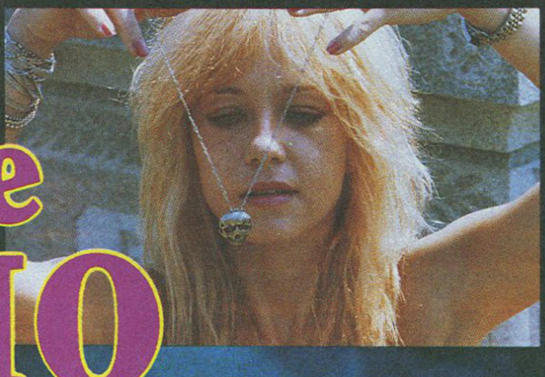


"Ah, it's only a flesh wound!" scoffs a swinging *Skinned Alive!* babe.



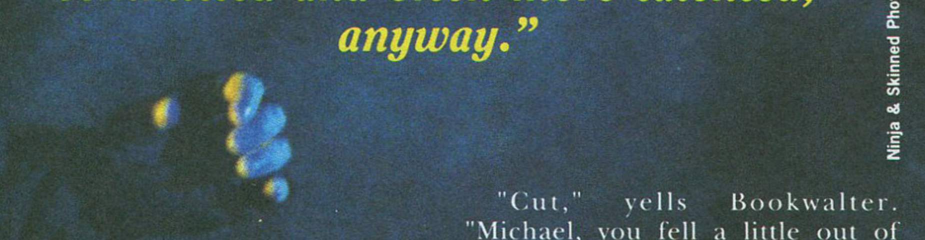
Well, there goes this guy's career as a cartoonist.

Linnea Quigley adds some sex appeal to *Falling Angels*.



The OHIO TERROR TRIP

By DAVID KUEHLS



Ninja & Skinned Photos: Courtesy J.R. Bookwalter

"Older directors are not into horror projects. The younger people are more committed and often more talented, anyway."

For a long time, the only really horrifying thing about Ohio has been the Cleveland Indians. Now several young filmmakers are out to change all that.

It's a hot summer morning in Green Township, just south of Akron, where a garage has been converted into a makeshift laboratory for a key scene in J.R. Bookwalter's *Robot Ninja*. Bookwalter, director of the still-unreleased *The Dead Next Door* (Fango #62) lies flat on the floor behind the camera as the battered and bloody title character (played by Michael Todd) staggers into the room and falls to the ground. Fake blood spurts out of his mouth on impact and a tooth pops out.

"Cut," yells Bookwalter. "Michael, you fell a little out of frame. Let's try it again."

Todd rises and walks over to a Kayro syrup jar for another swig of fake blood, while a crew member in a Batman shirt combs the floor for the fake tooth. After two more takes, Bookwalter is satisfied and calls for a pastry break.

Upstairs in the kitchen, the 22-year-old Bookwalter munches on a raspberry danish and explains how he came to direct his second feature. "I was in Los Angeles last winter, putting the finishing touches on *The Dead Next Door*," Bookwalter begins. "Bruce Campbell and Scott Spiegel were helping out with the dubbing. There I met Dave DeCoteau, and I showed him a copy of the film. He liked it. The day before I left for Akron, he said he had the rights to the title *Robot Ninja* and asked if I would like to give it a shot. I said OK. During the three-day bus ride back to Ohio, I wrote a synopsis, which DeCoteau liked. The movie was conceived while going Greyhound."

DeCoteau, for his part, was impressed with Bookwalter. "I have a lot of faith in J.R. and his script," the 27-year-old producer/director praises. "I saw *The Dead Next Door*, and it was well done except for the low-budget aspects. Besides, older directors are not into horror projects. The younger people like J.R. are more committed and often more talented, anyway. When *Robot Ninja* started, I was thinking of flying out to Ohio to oversee, but the dailies they sent me were so good, I didn't have to."

While not as ambitious as the zombie epic *The Dead Next Door*, *Robot Ninja* has a tighter storyline and, if the rough cut is any indication, delivers a better movie for the budget (about $200,000). It should sell well because of the "ninja" tag, but in actuality this dark revenge fantasy, which concerns a comic book writer who assumes the identity of his favorite character, has more in common with Bruce Wayne than Bruce Lee.

"The last thing I wanted to do was make a ninja picture," confides Bookwalter. "[Robot Ninja creator] David Lange and I wanted the character to have a little Oriental flavor, but mainly he's a comic book character. For all that matters, he could be Spider-Man.

"His main weapon," Bookwalter goes on, "is the pair of blades attached to his right hand. His first time out in costume, he accidentally kills a kid. This pushes him over the edge a bit. Then he starts taking drugs to stay awake, and the next time out, he gets brutally beaten. By the end of the movie, he's a very confused, violent man."

Violent is a good word to describe *Robot Ninja*. It's got mutilations aplenty, shotgun blasts and a double-bladed eye gouging. Overall, the movie proved too intense for even one of splatter's elite. "I sent a rough cut to Scott Spiegel," Bookwalter smiles. "It was too much for him, too violent. He objected to a lot of it."

"Hmmm...prob'ly another of them motocross accidents," thinks this astute rural detective.

> "During the three-day bus ride, I wrote a synopsis. The movie was conceived while going Greyhound."
> —J.R. Bookwalter, director

Cinema Home Video, DeCoteau's own company, recently released *Robot Ninja* to video in unrated form. Still, it has drawing cards other than blood and guts. In August, Bookwalter filmed in Los Angeles for a weekend; there, DeCoteau nailed down Burt Ward for a rare appearance. The erstwhile Robin was "very professional" in his small role as a comic book publisher, reports Bookwalter, who also directed cameos by Linnea Quigley, DeCoteau, Spiegel and *Evil Spawn* director Ken Hall.

Sticking to his word about having faith in young filmmakers, DeCoteau financed two more direct-to-video horror movies in Akron last fall. First up was *Robot Ninja* production manager Jon Killough's *Skinned Alive!*, a *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*-type thriller starring Scott Spiegel as the lead psycho. The second untitled project will follow shortly this year. Bookwalter produced and DeCoteau served as executive producer on both.

There's no raspberry danish on the menu at the crowded Wendy's in Columbus, Ohio, so Linnea Quigley orders ice cream for desert. "I get the soft-serve vanilla and chocolate with crushed nuts and Oreo cookies," the horror queen asserts to your GOREZONE correspondent, who squeezes in next to her.

Quigley is taking a lunch break from her chores on the Columbus-based *Falling Angels* (title subject to change). She's still in costume (black boots, black miniskirt and halter top), which draws plenty of eye-popping stares from other, mostly male, customers. On her right forearm, a wicked-looking latex scar in the shape of an upside-down cross protrudes. In this movie, Quigley portrays a modern-day witch.

"I always wanted to play a witch," she enthuses. "As a little girl, that's what I wanted to be, and now I'm one. I've been doing a lot of real campy, silly characters lately. This witch role is a good change. I play a recruiter for a satanic cult that's taken over a small town. When people like the journalist in this movie [played by Chicago-based comic Dino Tripodis] come to town, I'm sent to convince them by various means."

The means include logic, but when all else fails, there's the oldest lure in the book. "In one scene," the striking actress reveals, "I wear a trenchcoat, with nothing underneath."

From the next booth, writer/director Eric Swelstad quickly defends his use of an unclad Quigley. "Yes, there's nudity in the film," the 24-year-old filmmaker reasons, "but it's not exploitative. Part of the aura of satanism is the ability to seduce with power and with sex. That's why so many people find the occult so exciting. Power and sex—the two go hand in hand."

Falling Angels, currently shopping for a distributor, is the second horror film lensed in Columbus in the past few years. The first, *Beyond Dream's Door*, is available from VidAmerica. Swelstad served as assistant director on that movie, and his partner, producer Steve Williams, was production manager. Williams used the sale of that film as a selling point to gather local financing for *Falling Angels*. The next step, they agreed, was to get a name actor or actress. "At first, we looked at Klaus Kinski," recounts Williams. "He comes for $125,000 for three weeks of work. There was no way we could afford that. Then I thought of Linnea Quigley. When I got in touch with her, she only wanted $1,000 a day, so I signed her for four days. I'm glad we got her. We can afford it, and we've got the right kind of scenes for her. Her part was not in the original script. Eric reworked one of the roles to fit Linnea after we signed her. Linnea's part is a good one, a serious role. If we had camped it up, it wouldn't have fit into the context of the story. As it stands, I'm very pleased with Linnea's work and the way the movie is going. She's worth it. But you know, the movie has other things going for it, too."

Williams is referring to several measures he and Swelstad have taken to give *Falling Angels* that bigger-than-you-thought look. The first was signing *Beyond Dream's Door*'s director of photography, Scott Spears. "Scott gave *Beyond Dream's Door* that lush, layered look, which was a big selling point for the film," contends Swelstad. "It looked like 35mm, even though it was shot on 16mm, and that's the way *Falling Angels* looks, too.

"We've also got extremely authentic locations," Swelstad continues. "If a shot, like some we did today, is set in a high school, we film there. We have a lot of ceremony scenes in a quarry, which we shot at a real quarry. Incidentally, we hired an actual ritualist to build the satanic altar

(continued on page 65)

The First Days of Jim VanBebber

Don't wait around for *this* maniac to get his own TV series. *The Last Days of John Martin* sets a new standard for realism in horror.

Here's a heartland filmmaker who can really kick some ass—both cinematically and otherwise. Twenty-five-year-old karate enthusiast Jim VanBebber is an Ohio auteur whose credentials read like a one-man army: director, screenwriter, actor, special makeup FX artist, stuntman, fight choreographer and editor. His first feature film, *Deadbeat at Dawn*, is a hard-driving splatter/actioner that often recalls a young Tobe Hooper or John Carpenter at work. The fight scenes are especially exciting and well executed, featuring vicious knifings, shootings, throat rippings and finger chompings, frequently punctuated by righteously gory makeup FX.

VanBebber is now currently shooting *Charlie's Family*, a rowdy creepy-crawl inside the mind of this generation's most high-profile psychopath, Charles Manson. Early rushes show the work to be a noncompromising, brutally realistic insider's view of one of the most notorious massacres in recent criminal history. Unlike the tepid, spineless TV docudrama *Helter Skelter*, VanBebber's film promises to get down and dirty and force passage directly into the belly of the beast. It won't be pretty. And strangely enough, the entire monster is being filmed in VanBebber's hometown, Dayton.

Another project VanBebber expresses a real fondness for is his proposed urban cannibal opus, *The Last Days of John Martin*. The 15-minute promo reel is a genuinely intense, hair-raising, deeply troubling visit with a varmint-scarfing roadkill connoisseur who turns to cannibalism when the possums become too crusty to scrape off the road. The sampler ends with the titular gut-muncher butchering one hitchhiker and cooking the other in a chicken-wire, stove-top crematorium. This is no-nonsense horror; as this reporter has said before (and gladly says again), *The Last Days of John Martin* could very well be the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* of the '90s.

Not surprisingly, VanBebber is thoroughly disgusted with the current state of the horror film. "The genre needs *John Martin*, right now," he insists. VanBebber, a lifelong FANGORIA and GOREZONE reader, spares little bile when assessing the recent crop of genre product. "What the hell?" he snaps. "It's sickening. Everything is geared toward making money. If you're gonna make a film, you're making *art*. Be *true* to it." The young auteur cites *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* as a real watershed film for him, but rails against the sequels. "Everybody is missing the point. You don't need an Excalibur chainsaw, and Leatherface doesn't need a kid on his lap."

He wants to set things straight with *John Martin*. "The film is heavily inspired by both John Gacy and Henry Lee Lucas," he notes. "It will be a very real look at a certain element of society that is truly sick. It's my dream project, and my two cents' worth in the horror genre. I feel very strongly about that cannibal. I need to make this film."

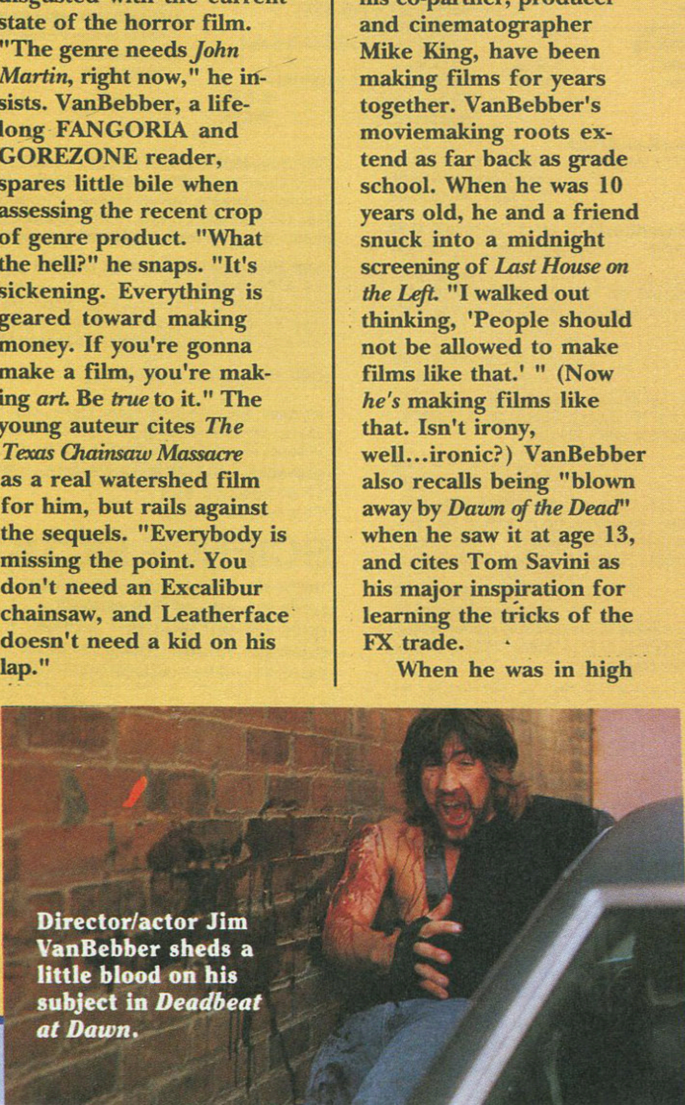
Both VanBebber and his co-partner, producer and cinematographer Mike King, have been making films for years together. VanBebber's moviemaking roots extend as far back as grade school. When he was 10 years old, he and a friend snuck into a midnight screening of *Last House on the Left*. "I walked out thinking, 'People should not be allowed to make films like that.' " (Now *he's* making films like that. Isn't irony, well...ironic?) VanBebber also recalls being "blown away by *Dawn of the Dead*" when he saw it at age 13, and cites Tom Savini as his major inspiration for learning the tricks of the FX trade.

When he was in high school, VanBebber's 40-minute, 8mm "karate rock opera" *Into the Black* earned him a film scholarship to Wright State College, where he made several attention-getting short films before devoting himself full-time to the production of *Deadbeat at Dawn*. He has never looked back.

While VanBebber negotiates with distributors for the eventual videocassette release of *Deadbeat* (already popular overseas in both Japan and Europe, though he gleefully notes that it's been banned in Great Britain and West Germany), he is quick to acknowledge that the violent content of his film will push it well past the R zone. Adamant about his feelings toward the MPAA and deeply resentful of their growing infestation into all levels of filmmaking, VanBebber is upfront and refreshingly blunt. "Every self-respecting GoreZonian should swamp both Jack Valenti and the MPAA with letters," he bristles, "and tell them to stay the [*expletive deleted*] out of the videocassette market." Spoken like a trouper.

Let's all hope that guys like VanBebber will help make the genre both a redder and better place to be in the upcoming decade. *Deadbeat at Dawn* will be appearing on various cable stations by year's end, with a domestic cassette release to follow.

—*Chas. Balun*



Director/actor Jim VanBebber sheds a little blood on his subject in *Deadbeat at Dawn*.

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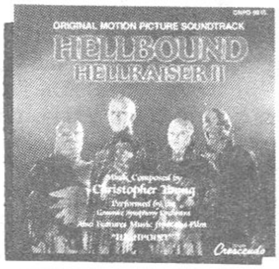
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FICTION

(continued from page 31)

still not sure I believe everything you two've told me. How are we going to explain this to the captain?"

Arkady Velich slapped the iron bludgeon into his open palm. "Oh, we're not, Kay. Captain would never believe the truth." He turned to Makarov, stone-faced. "But we *are* going to tell him the truth—of a sort.

"We are going to finish with this body so it is unrecognizable, like the others, and then we're going to run it through ballistics. That should take, oh, an hour or so. Ballistics will show two slugs in this body—slugs belonging to the *colonel's* gun. The victim will, of course, remain unidentifiable, but her killer—well, I'd say he has two options, really: He can either get the hell out of this country before that ballistics report comes through, or he can stay here and stand charges for the Waterbury-Kensington mass murders, of which he is very likely to be convicted."

Arkady narrowed his eyes. "Whether you go to jail or home to Mother Russia is immaterial to me, you supercilious little Bolshevik. Either way, the murders are explained and over. Case closed."

"Don't threaten me, Velich," smirked Makarov. "You've no idea the kind of power my people have here."

"You, on the other hand, should have a very good idea of the power of this .45," Kay said, snapping another clip into the weapon. "I think your usefulness to your 'people' here has come to an end."

"So," Makarov nodded. He pursed his lips. "As you say, my business here is done. The interests of the State have been served." He donned his dark hat, pulled his overcoat around him. "I...admire your cunning, Arkady Velich. I trust it will serve you as well the next time we meet." He smiled, tipped his hat at Kay Crecelius, and receded into the dark copse. A moment later, they heard his hurried footsteps clatter away into the night.

"Think we should stop him?" Crecelius inquired.

Arkady shook his head. "No point. He'll be in the air in a matter of minutes, probably out of the country before we're back to the precinct." He turned to look at the corpse. "Besides, he's the alibi we need to lay this thing to rest."

Kay waited out the moment's silence until Arkady looked back up to his partner. "Unless, of course, you choose to report something else."

Kay reached for a toothpick from his jacket pocket, cursed breathily when he found none. He looked at the thing, at its ghastly mouth and rent flesh and the arcane black circlet around its breast. He whistled low. Arkady was right; it was a birthmark, not a tattoo. And whatever this nightmare was, witch or devil or worse, it was not human.

He met Arkady's gaze. "You wouldn't stop me, would you, Arkady? If I reported you?"

He shook his head. "No. I killed that creature, and the five before it. They had to be killed, or else they would have killed in turn. No options; shoot or be shot. You know the drill. I can live with what I've had to do. Can you?"

Kay felt himself going in circles. He looked at the monster, remembered what it had done to him—or nearly done.

He smiled. "So how the hell would I charge you: 'Assault with intent to exorcise'?"

Arkady returned the smile. "Go home. This last business is the most unpleasant." He unsheathed a crude iron knife from its scabbard beneath his trousers.

"I bet,." Kay shivered. "Still, you couldn't exactly leave a face like that for some coed to discover tomorrow."

Kay turned, holstering his automatic, paused to glance back over his shoulder. "A witch, huh? Real 'Morgana le Fay.'"

Arkady nodded. "Baba Yaga."

Kay smiled. "'The Wicked Witch of the West.'" He shivered again, pulled his cracked leather jacket tight around his throat, and hurried quickly off through the empty commons.

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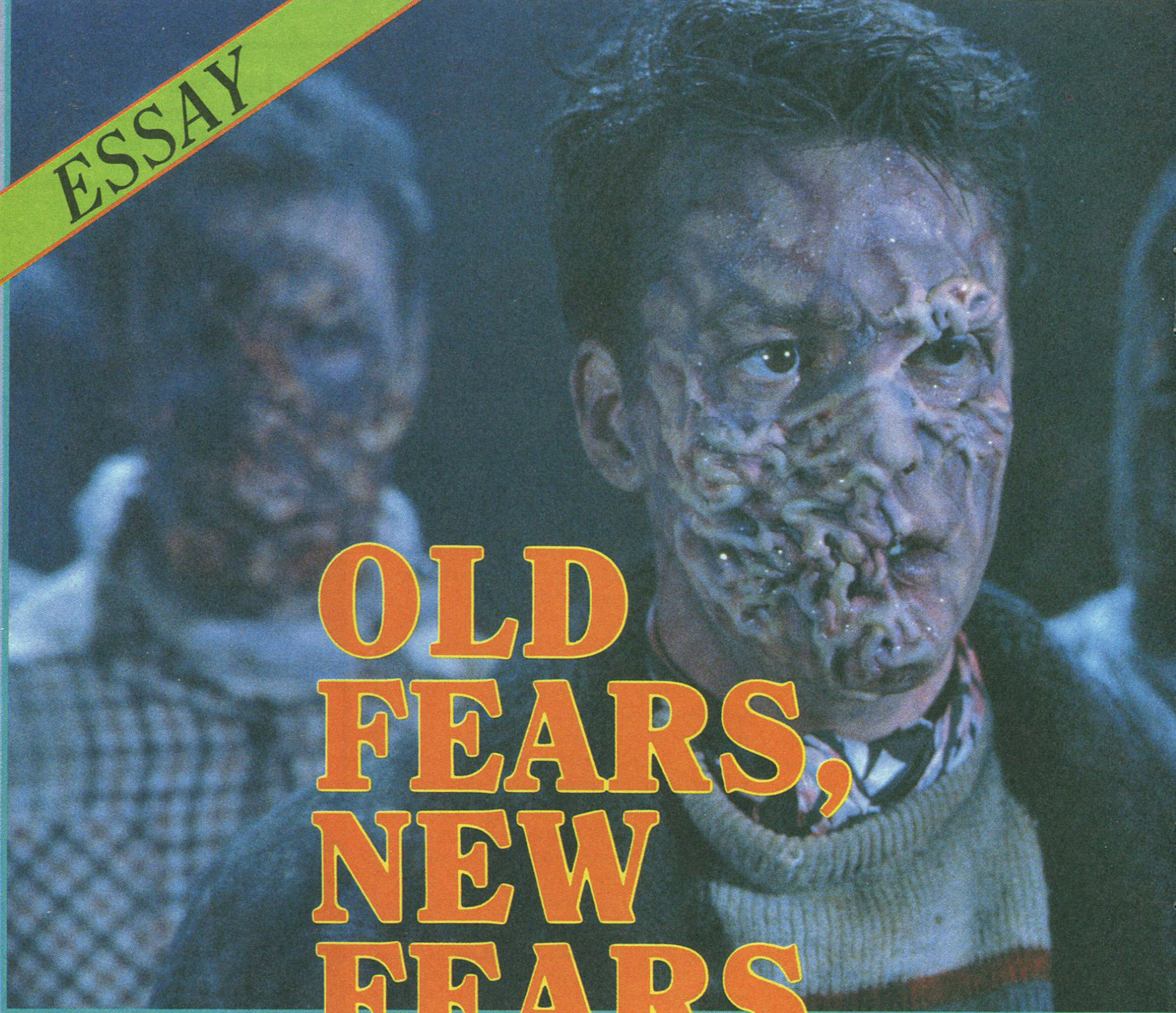


Photo: Murray Close/Copyright 1990 20th Century Fox

OLD FEARS, NEW FEARS

Sure, we're just as sick of the overmerchandised '80s as anyone else, but these *Nightbreed* guys would make cool toys.

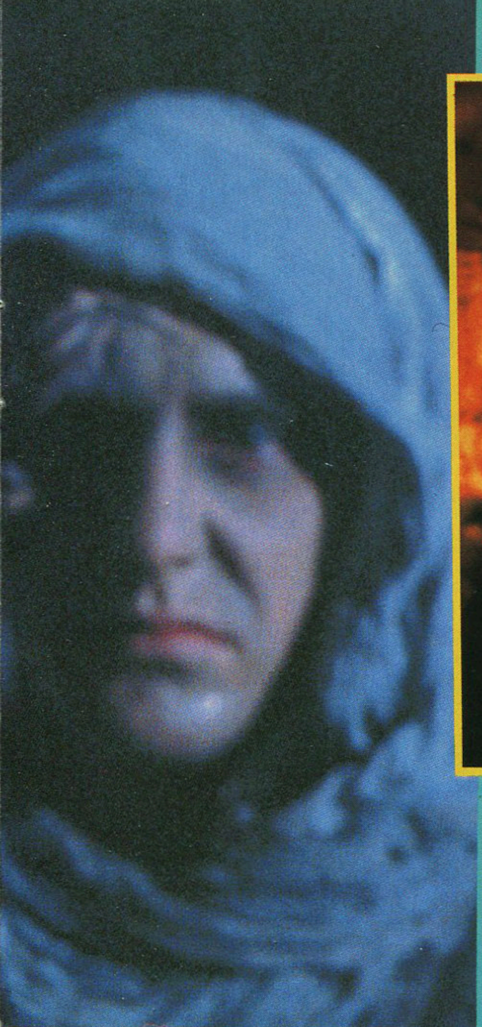
By STEPHEN R. BISSETTE

"If the MPAA has its way, unrated videos will be a thing of the past, and our last legal outlet to view the unviewable will be gone."

It was the best of years, it was the worst of years. 1989 was the year of Freddy—OK, you had your day, dog, now get out of my face. It was the year of Cable TV horror—ratings and sponsors rallied, while a range of filmmakers (from *Tales From the Crypt*'s lineup of directorial star auteurs, to *Monsters* and *Freddy's Nightmares*' actors and/or makeup-artists-turned-directors) repeatedly proved they couldn't tell a horror tale to save their lives. The year of the Sea Monsters, from *DeepStar Six* to *The Abyss*—blub, blub.

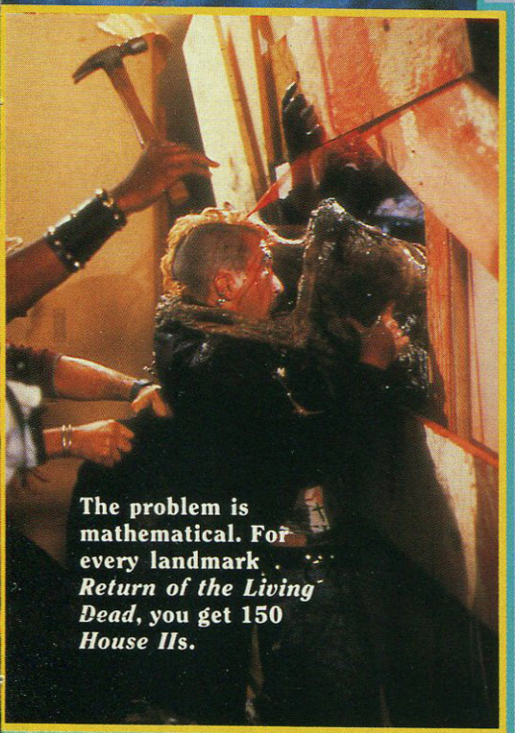
It was the year of *Pet Sematary*, the commercial state-of-the-art horror film, a downbeat slice of surprisingly graphic Grand Guignol that juiced the genre's box office status even as it embodied the shrill, meanspirited, vacuous trivialization of deep-rooted fears the modern terror film can successfully stir in audiences. To what end? To exploit rather than explore, the betrayal of the collective nightmare, of the genre and the medium's power and potential. The audiences, from Mom and Pop to the die-hard gorehounds, licked it up. The popular polar extremes of 1989: a wisecracking, murderous pedophile spewing freshman one-liners in this corner, and a zombie tot who talks like Daffy Duck on nitrous oxide in the other.

Honestly, I'm sorry to sound so sour. I *love* horror movies. But damn, it was a sad capper to a rocky decade. When slick vehicles like *The Fly II* and unpretentious if



Phantom of the Opera thankfully got Robert Englund out of that hideous latex and into—uh, well...

Photo: Copyright 1989 21st Century



The problem is mathematical. For every landmark *Return of the Living Dead*, you get 150 *House IIs*.

Photo: Copyright 1985 Orion

tacky entertainments like *The Phantom of the Opera* and Sean Cunningham programmers begin to look good, I have to worry. When screenwriters are paid more than you or I make in five years to write sequels that prove that they didn't watch the original films as closely as we did, that pointedly ignore the premise and specifics of the prior chapter in the first three minutes, I'm feeling a bit cheated. When overblown, big-budget extravaganzas or hotshot genre directors given the freedom to make their own films their own way (you hear me, John? Wes?) can't even follow their own minimal story logic; the meandering narrative proves to be "just a dream" nine times over in the film's first 10 minutes; the characters seem incapable of acting, thinking, feeling remotely human; horror lapses into unfunny comedy at every turn of the screw...well, I get pissed off.

If the filmmakers don't care, why should we? Even at the most base commercial level, the idiots don't protect their own greedy interests. Gulf & Western had a money machine with the *Friday the 13th* series, and couldn't *accidentally* make a single good film in the entire run. Jason took the Love Boat, not Manhattan. And how can Pinhead be the new Freddy when he was stupidly snuffed in his first sequel? Come on, gorehounds, tell me I'm full of it. Tell me you aren't fed up, too.

It's disheartening that the best films I have seen this past year, within and without the genre, simply aren't accessible to the average GOREZONE reader...or to any sizeable American audience, for that matter. *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*, *Santa Sangre*, even *Deadbeat at Dawn*, *Opera*, *Nekromantic*—sorry, Bunky, you just can't see 'em. Not yet, anyway, and maybe not ever. Maybe not on a big screen, maybe not even on your little 19-inch. And if you are somehow able to see them, you still may not see what the filmmakers made. The marketplace is a timid, fickle cesspool, and the bloody censors have to eat, too, you know.

On the other hand, it's heartening that a dark, genuinely subversive masterwork like *Dead Ringers* and a few gems such as *Brain Damage*, *Monkey Shines*, *Parents* and *Heathers* slipped out into the mainstream, however tentative their releases may have been. There are still a few shakers and movers, like George Romero and Clive Barker, burning their latest nightmares into celluloid for us all to share. Let us hope The Powers That Be allow us to see them. It is encouraging that the money machines named Jason, Freddy and Michael fell flat on their two-dimensional faces in 1989. Sorry, but I won't miss them at all if they just dry up and blow away. This decade we're stepping into will breed its own monsters, thank you, and I for one am ready to welcome them with open arms and eyes.

Yay! The genre belatedly embraces the freedom of cable TV, and proves that this new medium can be just as dull as the movies, after all.

TV horror gave the censorship brigade new targets for strongarm campaigns against advertisers.

Photo: Kelvin Jones/Copyright HBO

But what a world these monsters will be born into! The genre faces tough times ahead, I fear. More than ever before, it's a corporate industry, and corporations—amoral, abstract entities whose only goal is profit across the board at *any* cost—could not care less about any aspect of the genre other than gain or loss. Filmmakers aren't supposed to tell stories any longer; they're supposed to make money, period. And monsters aren't supposed to be scary, just marketable.

At this point, there appears to be a four-pronged devil's fork at our backside. The first prong is the timidity of the studios and the repressive climate sweeping the industry and the land at this time. Horror films that bite are rare beasts, and not considered commercial or even permissible. But these things are *supposed* to bite. That's why it's called horror. Breaking taboos is the entire *raison d'etre* of the genre. Breaking taboos is more of a tightwire act these days than ever before, and with the demise of the haven formerly provided by the drive-ins and the midnight movie phenomenon, only the video market offers an ever-shrinking outlet for unusual or unrated fare. As a result, the most subversive and truly adult genre films allowed theatrical play have sublimated their subversive and horrific elements, as in *Blue Velvet* and *Dead Ringers.* (Only Cronenberg's *The Fly* managed to get its cake and eat it, too, flaunting its excesses and still finding mainstream acceptance.) At present, this points to the genre's most compelling evolution, but precious few filmmakers share Lynch's or Cronenberg's sensibilities or skills.

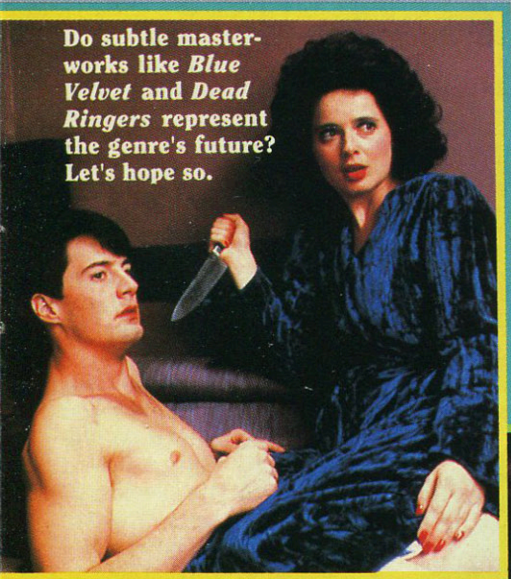
Fueling this industry timidity is the stigma the genre holds in the eyes of the censors. If breaking taboos is the goal of the horror genre, it will remain forever a target in the eyes of those whose job it is to reinforce the validity of those selfsame taboos. These are the people who are better than you or I, the stern moral crusaders made of the rare stuff that allows them to watch, day in, day out, the most depraved cinematic excesses while judging them unviewable by other, lesser mortals such as you and I. They might have to watch those depravities over and over and over to decide which nanosecond *has to go.* Does this desensitize them, drive them mad, turn them into killers? Why, no! They're better than us, don't you see? Morally superior intellects, vast, cool and unsympathetic, able to discern what can and cannot be tolerated by the inferior masses.

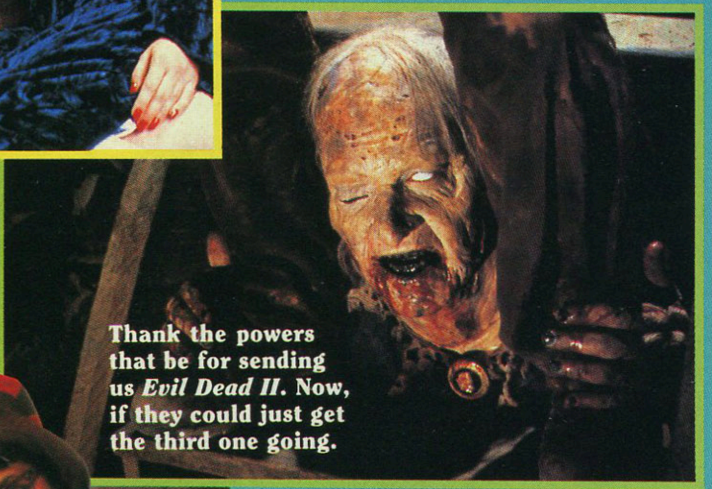
And still they claim they are not censors, though it is their reign that enforces the timidity of the studios and theaters. The MPAA may not wield the scissors, but they are responsible for every cut made, since directors are contractually obligated to deliver films that are, at the most extreme, R-rated. That the MPAA now controls the advertising of films proves the extent of their rule. How long are we going to stand for the tunnel vision these arrogant, insufferable brain police impose upon us all?

This enforced juvenilization of the American cinema is frustrating if one is an adult. I resent the fact that I can only see films aimed at a 17-year-old audience in the theaters, and that *is* what the R rating enforces, since adult fare—the stigmatic X, linked only with sexual pornography, or the commercially deadly "unrated" status—simply doesn't exist any longer. That those same censors are now moving into the video marketplace as well is the most ominous shadow stretching into the 1990s for the horror film connoisseur. If the MPAA has its way, unrated videos will be a thing of the past, and our last legal outlet to view the unviewable will be gone.

The power of video chains only adds to the problem and repressive climate. Note that the pervasive influence of the Blockbuster chain of video shops currently has video distributors cutting horror films that have already secured an R rating. The history of this enforced juvenilization is based entirely in the commercial interests of the industry (see Thomas Doherty's excellent book *Teenagers and Teenpics* for a study of this process) and, since the beginning of the 1980s, the industry-sanctioned reign of the MPAA.

This situation is deadly, not


Do subtle masterworks like *Blue Velvet* and *Dead Ringers* represent the genre's future? Let's hope so.


Thank the powers that be for sending us *Evil Dead II*. Now, if they could just get the third one going.

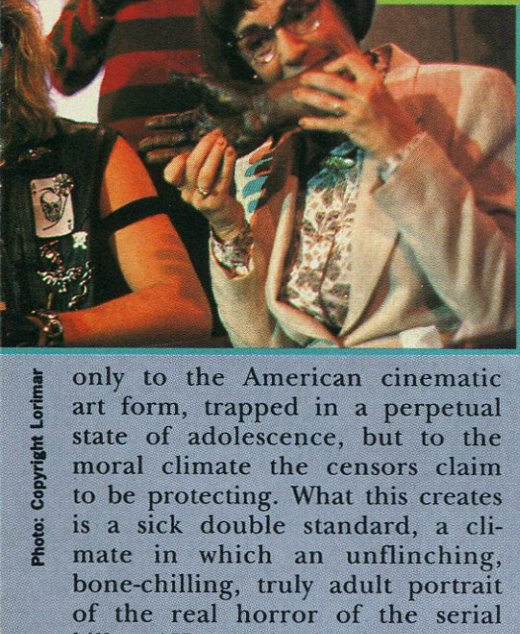


Photo: Copyright Lorimar

only to the American cinematic art form, trapped in a perpetual state of adolescence, but to the moral climate the censors claim to be protecting. What this creates is a sick double standard, a climate in which an unflinching, bone-chilling, truly adult portrait of the real horror of the serial killer (*Henry*) is simply not permissible, while a sanitized comic strip murderer like Freddy is not only acceptable, but perversely embraced as a pop icon and as toy fodder for kids. Tell me which is the more dangerous vision, the more "moral" climate?

This climate has created the second prong of the pitchfork, the horror film as cartoon. The plasticity of the medium invites this trend, which dates back to the innovative Italian horrors of Mario Bava, culminating in Dario Argento's seminal *Suspiria*. In American horror films, the magic moment was most likely the nightmare conclusion to *Carrie*, that had audiences everywhere literally jumping out of their seats. But it's gone sour. The impact of the *Carrie* climax is diminished when expanded into formulaic repetition, and the power of the meticulously orchestrated reality-segueing-into-dream/nightmare logic of the original *Nightmare on Elm Street* becomes meaningless in the sequels and imitations. The Fantastic—the intrusion of the extraordinary into an ordinary reality—becomes the Marvelous—a total fantasy world, where anything can and does happen. When anything can happen, and an identifiable "ordinary reality" ceases to act as an anchor, our emotions cease to be engaged.

The core of the film thus becomes humor and parody rather than horror. The rare successes like *Return of the Living Dead*, *Re-Animator* and especially *The Evil Dead* and *Evil Dead II* (Tex Avery is alive and well and making live-action cartoons under the name Sam Raimi) have only inspired crass, unfunny, witless dross. With precious few exceptions, horror comedies simply serve to sanitize the few remaining horrors, making them safer, toothless and more commercially palatable—to the distributors and censors, not the audiences. Horror is a confrontational, not escapist, genre, but it has been reduced to an empty-headed novocaine. If the monsters or murderers crack jokes after the mayhem, the impact instantly dissipates. The audience is reduced to brain-numbed sheep. But what does it matter, so long as the dross makes money? Even vapid fare like *Sleepaway Camp* and *Prom Night* yields video-market sequels, as horror becomes more and more a merchandisable commodity.

This brings us to the third tine of the fork, the reduction of horror to a profit venture, which trivializes and distorts anything of value in the genre. It is the most problematic symptom of the disease because it is the most lucrative, and in the eyes of an industry where the making of megabucks is all that matters, this *is* no problem. Leatherface and family in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, Freddy in the original *A Nightmare on Elm Street* and the Cenobites in *Hellraiser* were not manufactured nightmares, but honest, potent expressions of the filmmakers' unconscious-made-flesh. Given the fact that the creators lost or sold all rights, the companies were free to exploit these bogeymen to the max, blind to the fact that they cease to terrify in the wake of pathetic sequels, TV shows, dolls, cups, shirts, masks and "Freddy and his Victim" squirtballs.

In the process, the films and characters at the center of the merchandising cyclones are necessarily cleaned up, neutered and rendered worthless in the process. Jason was The Monkees of the genre: a contrived, cold-blooded money machine from day one, so no great loss there. Still, his success spawned this entire turn of events. In the torrent of cash flow, the genre is sagging because of both the reductio ad absurdum of its most potent symbols, and the demoralizing scuffle of its practitioners (Craven, et al) to create the next merchandisable character. In its wake, the erosion of the art and craft of storytelling is inevitable.

This is the fourth, and in many ways the most destructive, prong of the pitchfork. Only a handful of

(continued on page 65)

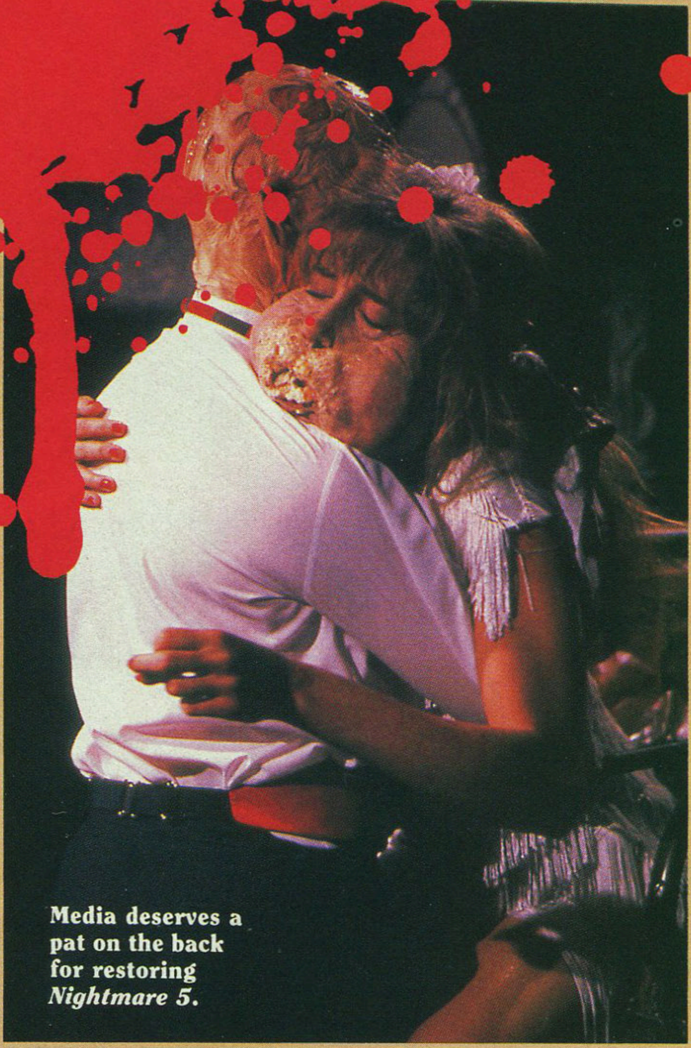
VIDEO WATCHDOG

By TIM LUCAS

Freddy Flick & Further Frights!

Bet you thought you'd never find the Video Watchdog, maven of European mayhem, opening up his lofty column to the likes of Freddy Krueger, but I feel it's newsworthy (and salutary) that Media Home Entertainment has chosen to fight the good fight with *A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child*. As those *Entertainment Tonight* viewers among you may recall, Stephen Hopkins' film was branded with an X rating by the inflexible MPAA prior to the film's release last summer on the basis of the imagery from two of its nightmares. The film was slightly albeit bluntly edited to prevent a postponed release, but Media is now offering the videocassette in both its theatrical R-rated and uncut/unrated editions.

The difference between the two versions amounts to little more than a minute of screen time. The first trims occur during Dan's motorcycle ride, after actor Danny Hassel is gorily, biomechanically fused to his bike in a scene strongly reminiscent of the handgun transformation engineered by Rick Baker's EFX Inc. in David Cronenberg's *Videodrome*. Most of this sequence appears in the theatrical release, with the exception of two shots—one in which Dan's leg is "fuel injected" by a penetrating slab of metal, and another showing the flesh and muscle of Dan's head peeling back from his exposed skull. From the moment Dan kick-starts his cycle to the end of the sequence, the scene clocks in at precisely one minute, 47 seconds.



Media deserves a pat on the back for restoring *Nightmare 5*.

The other target of Jack Valenti's wrath was an over-the-top, surreal dinner sequence in which the bulimic would-be model Greta (Erika Anderson) is slammed into a highchair and force-fed—from Chef Freddy's fingerblades—portions of a bleeding doll-shaped cake. Krueger then trowels digested food back into her mouth from her own exposed abdomen, until her cheeks are more swollen than those of the Radiator Lady in *Eraserhead*. This scene is especially choppy in the R-rated version, a particular outrage in light of its quasi-comic tone. From the beginning of the dinner scene to the point where it cuts away to Alice's kitchen, the footage runs a total of two minutes, 30 seconds.

(A brief sidebar for Freddyphiles: Eagle-eyed viewers may notice in the film's first nightmare—a flashback to the "mythical" Amanda Krueger's "mythic" violation by a thousand maniacs [the starting point, natch, of the Freddy "mythos"]—Robert Englund's snickering face among those of her teeming suitors. This clever bit of self-defeating casting narrows the issue of Freddy's paternity considerably.)

It's heartening to see a video major like Media Home Entertainment—who, after all, were pioneers in unrated video with early releases like Charles Kaufman's *Mother's Day*—continue to support freedom of expression with their enterprise. New Line Cinema should also be commended for not allowing the MPAA to control their film's final draft, and offering to Freddy's legion of fans the film they were intended but not allowed to see.

FULCI FOOTAGE FLEECED, BLOCKBUSTER BECOMING BIG BROTHER?

On the other hand, there is AIP Home Video's postponed release of *Dangerous Obsession*, a steamy erotic thriller directed by Lucio Fulci, released abroad under the provocative title *The Devil's Honey*. The movie stars attractive Bianca Marsillach (whose sister Christina starred in Argento's *Opera*) as a vengeful young woman whose kinky love affair with a jazz musician (Stefano Madia) is cut short when a neurotic doctor (Brett Halsey) allows him to die on the operating table. Marsillach abducts Halsey, strips him, makes him wear a collar and eat dog food, and so forth. You get the picture.

Or rather, you won't.

AIP's announced December 1989 release of the film was briefly postponed by the company's decision to tone the film down or, in the words of a company executive, to make *Dangerous Obsession* "more acceptable to Blockbuster Video store standards." Amazingly, the film was reportedly R-rated to begin with (not to mention only 79 minutes long!), meaning that AIP opted not only to tinker with the film's explicitness, but to futz around with its overall *tone*—by which I mean all of the controversial scenes that define the lead character's dark obsession, namely romantic interludes involving bizarre props like nail polish applicators, camcorders, rollercoasters and, yes, tenor saxophones.

> **It's heartening to see a video major like Media continue to support freedom of expression with their enterprise.**

Video insiders have been noting with increasing alarm the aggressively reformatory profile of Blockbuster Video—now America's largest video chain, with nearly 800 stores nationwide—which made headlines last year by announcing their refusal to stock Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Some customers have noticed that the success of that decision, from a publicity point of view, led to the subsequent removal from their shelves of many unrated and several R-rated horror titles. While AIP's decision to edit *Dangerous Obsession* is inarguably their own, it proves without doubt that we're entering a frightening new chapter of video history, one in which there's a video store chain with sufficient power to influence the content and editorial direction of every videocassette made commercially available. Think about it: If 800 stores buy only two or three copies of your tape each, you're substantially ahead, and they're making sure that everyone in America knows what kind of material they *won't* stock.

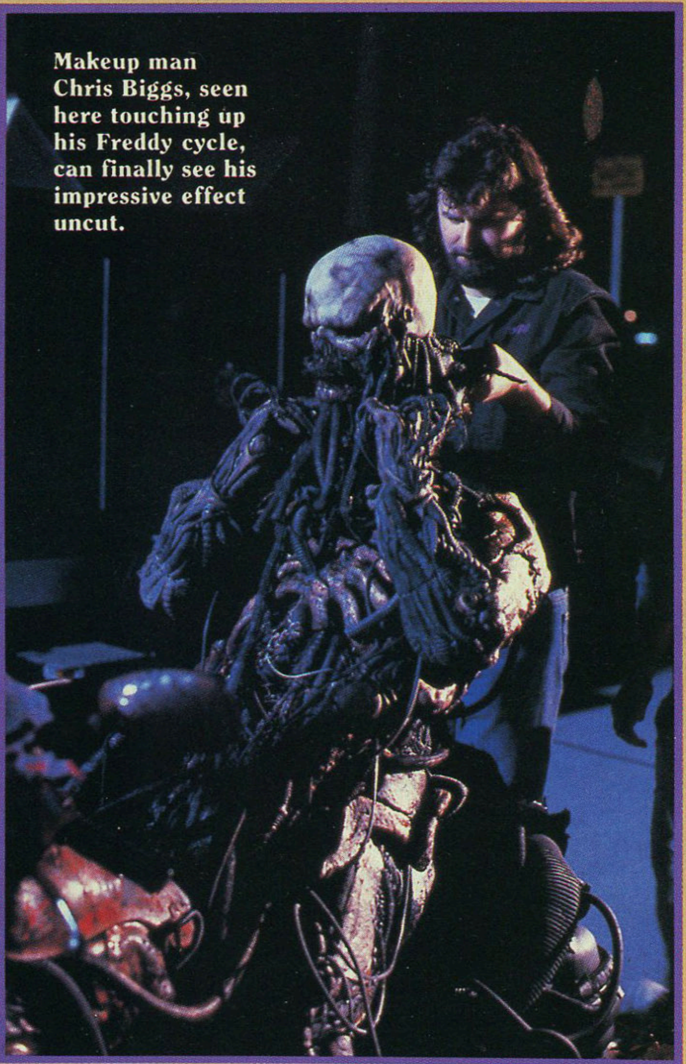
The Watchdog is very fond of AIP Video—they made Mario Bava's *The Invaders* (a.k.a. *Erik the Conqueror*), Antonio Margheriti's *The Virgin of Nuremberg* (a.k.a. *Horror Castle*) and several worthy sword-and-sandal

Freddy should devise a similar torture for the MPAA, feeding them the excised footage from every censored horror film.

If this guy wants to *Dial Help*, how can he see the numbers?

epics available—and doesn't intend to malign or discourage them. But they could do worse than follow Media's example and offer their audience that which Blockbuster Video monolithically withholds: a choice.

GoreZonians do have alternatives. An uncut, Italian-language version of Fulci's film can be found in ethnic video stores under the title *Il Miele del Diavolo*. It's from UVI Video Productions. It's also letterboxed. Rent or buy that version instead. The other alternative is to do as the Watchdog does, and take your trade to establishments that are in the business of renting and selling videos—*not* giving dictation.



Makeup man Chris Biggs, seen here touching up his Freddy cycle, can finally see his impressive effect uncut.

Fred Photos: Michael Leshnov/Copyright 1989 New Line Cinema

CANNIBAL CONNOISSEUR CALLS COLLECT

Ruggero Deodato. The very name, when its rococo syllables are uttered, seems to open beneath one's feet the trapdoor to a bottomless pit, dropping us screaming into some of the most gruelling, horrific and degrading experiences ever filmed. Up till now, the best examples of this man's singularly harrowing talent was Video City's *Jungle Holocaust*, a retitling of his *The Last Survivor* (*Ultimo Mondo Cannibale*, 1976), or Vestron's *The House on the Edge of the Park* (1981, with *Last House on the Left*'s David Hess).

C*annibal Holocaust* is Deodato's most accomplished film and perhaps the most traumatic to endure in the annals of horror.

At last, Mogul Video is releasing *Cannibal Holocaust* (1979), Deodato's most accomplished film and perhaps the most traumatic to endure in the annals of horror. (The Phantom of the Movies' recently published *The Phantom's Ultimate Video Guide* [Dell] claims it was previously available from Video City, but be advised: Much of this hefty reference tome virtually qualifies as imaginative fiction.) At the time of this writing, Mogul's release was still pending, so it's not yet certain how complete their version of *Cannibal Holocaust* will be. A scene rumored to be missing from American prints—a piranha attack—led to great anticipation for the film's recent Japanese laserdisc release, but nothing new materialized apart from the cubist "masking" of technologically digitized genitalia.

This movie's searing enough to boil anyone's brain, and Deodato himself has shown a perhaps reactionary tendency in recent efforts toward the mild, and sometimes the outright ridiculous. Vidmark's *Phantom of Death* (1986, starring Michael York) was released here in unrated form, but New World Video's R-rated *Cut and Run* (1987, with Michael Berryman and Willie Aames) was substantially reduced in impact. The facts of this reduction are emphasized in the film's Italian-language version, *Infierno al Diretto* ("Straight to Hell"), which has recently surfaced in ethnic video stores. This version is actually a couple of minutes *shorter* than the milder domestic version, replacing a lot of talk and to-and-fro traveling with no small amount of graphic gore. The film's most unforgettable moment, a highlight worthy of Deodato's demonic intensity, shows a man drawn and quartered by a cruel feat of arboreal engineering.

For Deodato at his stupidest, try Cannon's *The Barbarians* (1988) or Prism's brand-new *Dial Help* (1989), which shows the maestro badly fumbling his way through a silly "killer telephone" scenario. Charlotte Lewis (the ripe-featured beauty seen in Eddie Murphy's mystic flop *The Golden Child*) stars as Jenny, a sullen yet ditzy fashion model who has named a tank of 15 tropical fish after the Seven Dwarfs. Deodato, possibly the Gauguin of horror films, is at his best and most personal only in primitive settings and situations, and this hi-tech, low-IQ romp succumbs quickly to Tony Scott cliches of blue-lit, venetian-blinded, ceiling-fanned rooms. Claudio Simonetti—the ex-*Goblin* keyboardist who contributed themes to Argento's *Phenomena* and *Opera*—supplies an only fleetingly distinguished, arena rock-style score, but it's there for you collectors. The film also features a cameo appearance by expatriate American actor William Berger (star of *The Murder Clinic*, *The Eyes of Dr. Orloff*, *Devilfish*, etc.), whose pacemaker explodes in a bloodless scene that will probably surface intact a couple of years down the road in an Italian-language variant edition.

VARIOUS VERBOTEN VIDEOS VICTORIOUSLY VOUCHSAFED

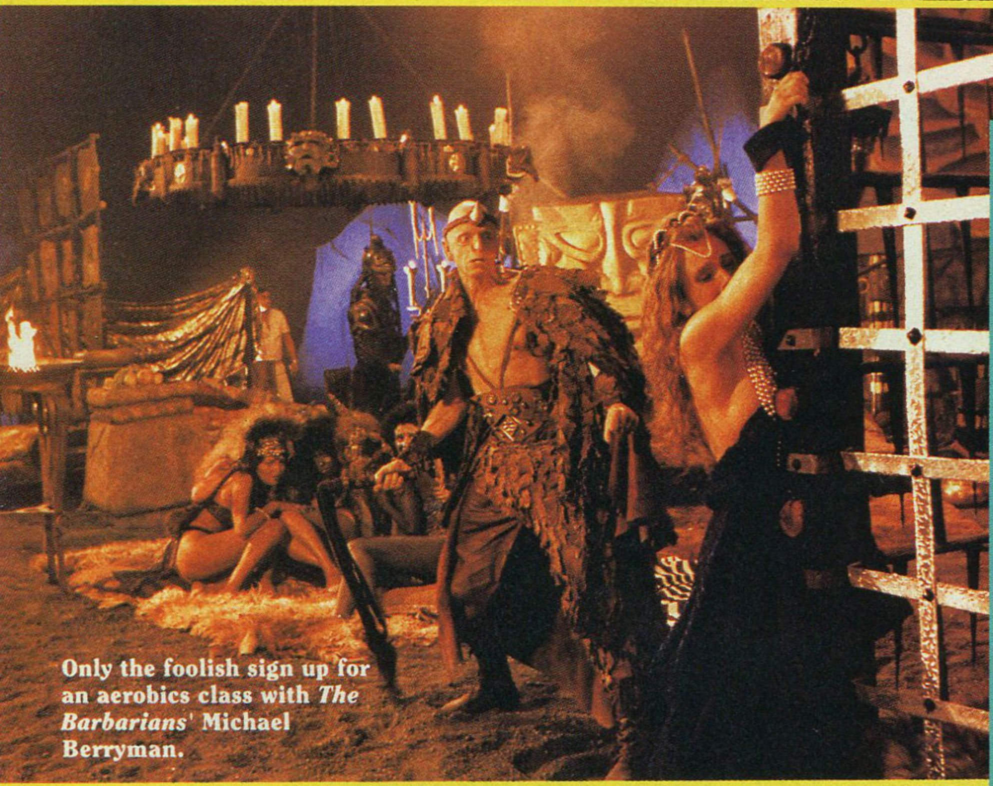
Video Mania (Suite 129, 2520 N. Lincoln, Chicago, IL 60614), a mail order company, has announced some unique holdings, among them a 95-minute, English-language version of Paul Naschy's *Count Dracula's Great Love* (this extremely rare prerelease print is reportedly slightly pinkish and intermittently scratchy, but a full *12* minutes longer than Sinister Cinema's theatrical release print) and *Scream of the Caged Virgins*, an 82-minute English print of Jean Rollin's erotic *Requiem for a Vampire* (1971). The *Dracula* film is already available as of this writing, but *Scream* may prove a dodgier proposition. After all, the video release of

Paolo Heusch's *Werewolf in a Girl's Dormitory* (1961), which Video Mania announced last summer, still hasn't happened.

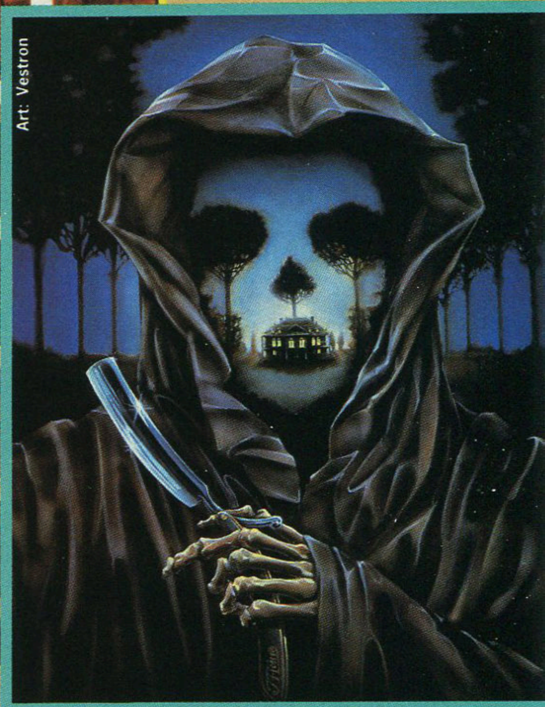
United American Video Corporation—which released Dennis Hopper's *The Last Movie* (see last issue)—has entered into the budget video business with panache, offering a slew of fine titles for under $10. Among their first releases are John Gilling's *Mania* (1959, the visual quality superior to that of Sinister Cinema's version, *The Flesh and the Fiends*), A.L. Mariaux's *Oasis of the Zombies* (which contains footage from Jess Franco's *Tomb of the Living Dead*), and John Carpenter's *Assault on Precinct 13*. The company also handles budget releases nominally attributed to "Gemstone Entertainment, of Nashville, TN," which include two elusive Paul Naschy films: *Dracula versus Frankenstein* (actually *Assignment: Terror*, 1969, unrelated to the Al Adamson loser) and *The Curse of the Devil* (*Retorno de Walpurgis*, 1973, a sequel to *The Werewolf versus the Vampire Woman*, 1970). Packaging is generally excellent.

Photo: Courtesy Alan Jones

***Cannibal Holocaust* is not the place for the *Candid Camera* team.**



Only the foolish sign up for an aerobics class with *The Barbarians*' Michael Berryman.



Art: Vestron

Imaginative cover art for *House at the Edge of the Park* masks the video's inadequacies.

On the Sinister Cinema front, among their most interesting recent releases are John Llewellyn Moxey's *Horror Hotel* (a.k.a. *City of the Dead*, 1960; unquestionably THE best-looking print available of this recommended sleeper); *Orlak, El Infierno de Frankenstein* (an atmospheric, Spanish-language mechanical monster movie, directed by Mexico's most consistently talented horror director, Rafael Baledon); *Hercules and the Princess of Troy* (an English-language *peplum* shot in Italy—no dubbing!—featuring a memorably scary Carlo Rambaldi monster); and at long last *The Face of the Screaming Werewolf*, Jerry Warren's uproariously abortive version of the Mexican *La Casa del Terror* (1959), a Tin Tan comedy which featured Lon Chaney's final appearance as a werewolf. Chaney's fine, but the movie—which completely eliminates Tin Tan and all the *intentional* comedy—must be seen to be disbelieved.

Private Screenings' *The Class Reunion* is not a horror film, but the credit which reads: "Original Screenplay by A.C. Stephen and Edward D. Wood, Jr." may be of interest to more than a few readers. Stephen, of course, also helmed Wood's *Orgy of the Dead*, and the two also collaborated on *Fugitive Girls*, an early '70s nudie in which Wood himself briefly and depressingly appeared.

Oh, yes. Check this issue's Classified Massacre for some relevant news that didn't fit.

No matter how quiet you are, there's no escaping those Templars.

Amando de Ossorio would gladly bring back those Templars.

By DALE PIERCE

MASTER of the BLIND DEAD

"I don't know if anyone fainted or not, but there were plenty of screams. That made me feel great."

In the 12th century, an order of knights sprang up to defend pilgrims en route for the Holy Land in Jerusalem. Eventually, King Philip IV of France pressured the Church to suppress the order and execute its grandmaster; the remaining knights were placed in another order, and the vast wealth of the Knights Templar wound up in France.

Here reality stops and the mythos—similar to the hokum surrounding freemasonry—begins. According to legend, branches of Templar societies sprang up in Europe, which in turn were sought by the Church and exterminated. These groups, carrying their rituals beyond those of their founders, dealt in ritual sacrifices, the drinking of human blood and the search of eternal life. Not surprisingly, this shadowy sect eventually blended into superstition as a means of frightening children. From this European ghost story, one enterprising director created an entirely new breed of film monster that launched his career as a cult hero for horror devotees everywhere. His name is Amando de Ossorio.

Born in La Coruna, Spain in 1925, de Ossorio is still active in today's cinema. While he seems a chilling person upon first contact, a brief exchange of words reveals the contrary.

"I am most easily identified as a director of horror, mainly because of the series of films—four in all—concerning the Templars," he acknowledges. "Most people tend to forget I have done numerous other films as well. Prior to making the transi-

And they want to kill her?! They *must* be blind.

Photos: Courtesy Sam Sherman

EL BUQUE
MALDITO
EASTMANCOLOR
MARIA PERSCHY JACK TAYLOR
CARLOS LEMOS BARBARA REY MANUEL DE BLAS
BLANCA ESTRADA
director: AMANDO DE OSSORIO

El Buque Maldito gave the undead knights a chance for a quick dance number or two.

tion to horror, I was known as a director of Westerns. This was at the time when everybody and his brother was keen on making Western films, and I fit right into the mold. The Templars changed all that. Although it has been over a decade since I concluded the *Blind Dead* series, I still haven't forgotten them. I'm even thinking of bringing them back in yet another film, this time with some new twists involved."

Interest in another Templar film has grown because of recent video sales, which have brought the entire series to the English-speaking world along with a host of lesser-known projects such as *Night of the Witches, The Sea Serpent* and *Demon Witch Child.*

De Ossorio's Templars are blind zombies, corpses who lost their eyes while being executed for their crimes. Thus they rely upon supersensitivity to sound to find their victims. Riding decayed, undead horses, they terrorize the land they roamed alive centuries ago, seeking fresh victims in order to drink their blood. As with the vampire, blood is their source of immortality.

"The blindness was a very original idea on my part, and it is what made the films," de Ossorio explains. "In the films, the Templars are even able to pick up the beating of a human heart or the heavy, frightened breathing of a panic-stricken victim. This fact gave the films a lot more impact in the theater than on video, because the theater crowd was able to sense the building tension, the fear, the anticipation. That's what made the films so scary: the universal fear of the audience mingled with the fear of the characters on the screen. The grating, chanting score by Anton Abril, combined with the stumbling and groping movements of the Templars toward whatever noise they hear, builds the suspense time and time again. Some of the moments that are the most horrific to me are not the killings and the flying blood or mutilated victims, but the build-up just before the attack. I used all my knowledge as a director and writer to make these scenes stick in the viewers' minds. I wanted them ready to faint. I don't know if anyone ever did or not, but there were plenty of screams coming from the audience. I know that much, and that made me feel great. It was a sign my tactics worked."

The Templars first came to the screen in 1971's *La Noche del Terror Ciego* (a.k.a. *Tombs of the Blind Dead*), which deals with a series of murders in the Portuguese countryside outside Lisbon. A group of young people investigating the killings become unlucky victims when they discover the long dead knights rising from their graves in search of human prey. In the conclusion, the killer knights are still at large, going strong after wiping out a trainful of tourists.

In *El Ataque de los Muertos Sin Ojos* (a.k.a. *The Return of the Evil Dead*), another group of Templars are destroyed by angry townsfolk. The cult's leader vows to return from the grave—and on the 500th anniversary of the event, the Templars do just that, killing people right and left until sunlight and the presumed faith of a few survivors cornered in a church

Photo: John Cocchi

The "Burn a Witch Today" campaign gets underway in de Ossorio's *Malenka* (a.k.a. *Orgy of the Living Dead*).

bring these blood-drinking zombies to a fitting end.

In *El Buque Maldito* (a.k.a. *Horror of the Zombies*), the least of the series, the Templars appear and disappear on a ghost ship, foolishly boarded by inquisitive boaters who meet the same fate dealt everyone who encounters the sightless slaughterlords. In the end, the Templars leave their sinking ship, stumbling onto dry land to wreak havoc among the living once again.

The final entry in the saga brings us *La Noche de los Gaviotas* (a.k.a. *Night of the Seagulls*), in which modern-day Templars pose as great a threat as their undead counterparts. In this film, a young doctor and his wife move to a town where Templar-worshippers make ritual sacrifices to the zombie knights, tying up virgins for the monsters to devour. This, the series' bloodiest, featured a bigger budget and added graphics (de Ossorio oversaw the makeup, mask designs and FX himself), such as beating hearts ripped from bared breasts, Templars shredding away human flesh and a morbid finale in which the Templars melt when exposed to sunlight.

"I created a very unique and original breed of monster," de Ossorio reasons. "I wanted something original, so rather than copying the vampire and werewolf stories other people were making, I thought up this brand-new breed of blind, undead thing which is neither vampire nor zombie, but a cross between the two. I gave them extra-sensitive hearing and rotting, undead horses to ride. I created a series based on knights from beyond the grave, and it worked out well. Granted, the response to the films was greater in Europe than in America. When the films played in theaters, the rights sold almost instantly for French, Italian and German release, with U.S. distribution lingering behind, but this changed with video. From what I have heard, the films have developed an American cult following of their own. That's why I believe it may be time to do another film and bring them back."

De Ossorio debates further changes in his pet breed of monster, enabling them to breathe underwater and attack swimmers like something out of *Jaws*. While the idea sounds a bit far-fetched at first, the director defends the notion quite well. "In the third film, the Templars sail the sea in a ghost ship, which sinks, and they wash up on the beach," he points out. "What I plan to have them do is go back in the water, live there, and come out at night. Picture a swimmer in the water at night, when all of a sudden this knight comes out of nowhere and attacks her! I have thought of having a whole group of them attack at once, like sharks. If the camera angles were done right, it could be highly effective. Even more importantly, it's an original game plan, which I am always after.

"There are several ideas I have in my head, but getting these ideas down on paper and turning them into film is a very difficult process," de Ossorio sighs. "The Spanish government does not supplement or finance horror films, only 'artistic' films, which means I have to find individual producers if I want my work to see the screen. These producers could come from anywhere, be it Spain, England, Germany, France or a combination of many places. The problem is getting them to invest. What is worse, films cannot be shot as cheaply as they once were in Europe. Everything is expensive now, and it's getting worse."

Asked about the lack of consistency in the Templar series, which has been the focal point of criticism in America, de Ossorio responds quickly and, for the first time, defensively. In some of these films, the undead knights are free to walk around in either night or day; they are instantly killed by sunlight in others. This makes no difference, argues de Ossorio. Nor should the fact that two conflicting reasons are given for the knights' losing their eyes in the first two films. (Crows peck out the corpses' eyes in *Tombs of the Blind Dead* after the knights are executed by hanging, while in *Return of the Evil Dead*, the knights are blinded by irate townspeople, before being burned alive.)

"The Templar series is not meant to be a series in the true tradition of sequels as an American audience is trained to think, but a series of films containing the same sect of villains and nothing more," de Ossorio elaborates. "Each film is *not* a continuation of the one before it, in the manner of *Rocky*; *First Blood* or *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. This is why I felt free to make changes as I went along, which are easily noted by the series' followers. Each film has an identity of its own and can stand on its own merit, even if viewed by someone who has not seen the films before. For example, *Night of the Seagulls* was released in America long before the others, although this is to date the last of the films, and even those who knew nothing of the films beforehand found this movie enjoyable. Could the same be said for the *Nightmare on Elm Street* or *Rambo* series? No, I don't think so. To understand those sequels, one must be familiar with the beginning or original film. In Europe, the changes made no difference from film to film, because there is a different outlook here than in America, where each film with the same character is supposed to pick up where the part before it left off. This is the difference between European and American audiences."

While de Ossorio takes pride in his ghostly knights, he never misses a chance to exault upon his other horror films. Among his all-time favorites is *Demon Witch Child* (a.k.a. *The Possessed*) "The film deals with a child possessed by a dead witch," de Ossorio details. "When in a state of trance, the child's face con-

Photo: Courtesy Alan Jones

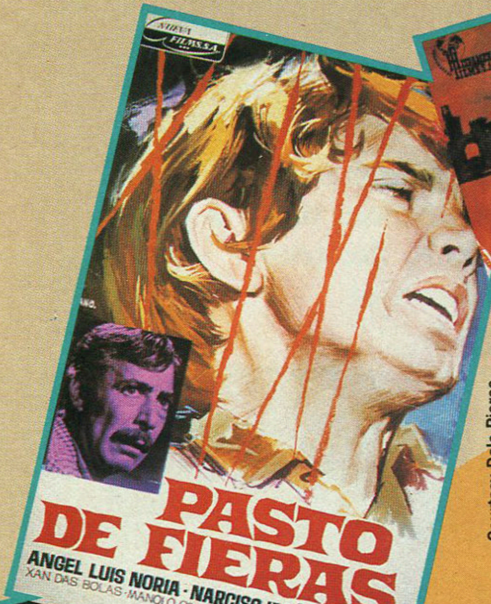
The Blind Dead ride!

"The Templar series is not meant to be a series in the true tradition of sequels."

verts to that of the old witch, although she still has the body of a young girl. It is a very strange film, unlike *The Exorcist* or other films dealing with possession. As always, originality was emphasized. The film might not have done as well as others I've made, but it didn't lack originality."

How does de Ossorio stand on gore and violence in his films? The answer would seem obvious just from viewing an uncut version of *Night of the Seagulls*, but the director happily clarifies his opinions. Preferring the term "special effects" over "splatter," he quickly points out the difference between European and American tastes, in the past moreso than the present.

"Europe was making bloody films long before America came up with *Friday the 13th* and so on," he begins. "The European culture is far more violent than America—in Spain, for example, with its bullfights and so on, even in modern times. What was seen as sick or distasteful to the American audience in the 1960s and 1970s—such as human hearts being torn out, half-naked women being slashed by swords while crazed knights drink their blood, heads being severed—were thought of as realistic special effects and nothing more in Spain. These scenes were not there to shock people, but to make the films more believable. It was not until the 1970s that America caught up with us. Their attitude toward gore on the screen changed greatly. Where before, they seemed to live in an era of old Karloff and Chaney pictures, which offered tremendous acting but no realistic bloodshed, they suddenly seemed to go crazy with the coming of *Friday the 13th*. They started emphasizing blood, falling heads and splattering guts, and they acted like they'd created something new, when in fact we had been doing the very same


PASTO DE FIERAS
ANGEL LUIS NORIA · NARCISO IBAÑEZ MENTA
XAN DAS BOLAS · MANOLO GIL
AMANDO DE OSSORIO
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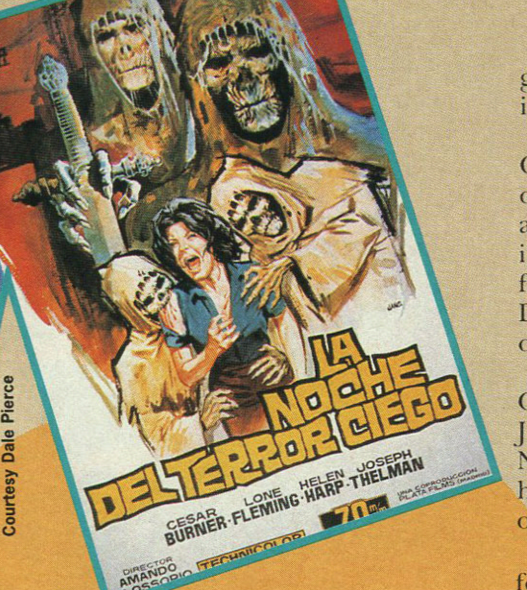
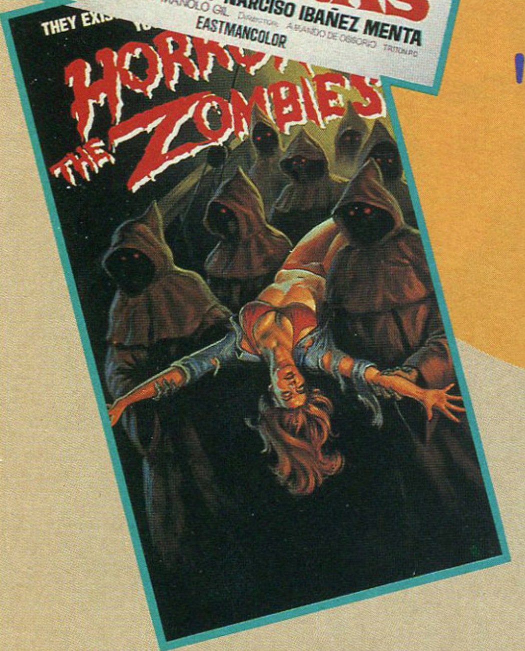

LA NOCHE DEL TERROR CIEGO
CESAR BURNER · LONE FLEMING · HELEN HARP · JOSEPH THELMAN
DIRECTOR AMANDO DE OSSORIO
TECHNICOLOR
70 m/m

Courtesy Dale Pierce



> "Europe was making bloody films long before America came up with *Friday the 13th*."

thing long before, over in Spain, Italy and Portugal."

Of his bloodiest films, de Ossorio notes *Night of the Witches* (also variously called *La Noche de los Brujos* or *Night of the Sorcerers*). The plot concerns a group of young people stumbling upon a tribe of vampiric witches, undead victims of ritual sacrifices in the African jungle. Graphic scenes (heavily cut in England, America and elsewhere) showed severed heads returning to life and snarling, plus a great deal of explicit violence and nudity.

"This film had all the ingredients of a great horror movie," de Ossorio feels. "It just didn't go over as well as I thought it would. Perhaps it was because the location was not what one might consider typical for either a horror movie or one of my films. I don't know. Perhaps in trying to be original, I drifted too far from the acceptable horror frame. I thought it had everything that would make a great scary story, but it didn't provoke the reaction I thought it would outside of Spain. Perhaps bad editing and the toning down of important scenes killed it off."

Other de Ossorio credits which have not yet found their way to your local video shop include *Rebeldes en Canada*, a "splatter Western," for lack of a better term; *Malenka*, a vampire tale starring Anita Ekberg; *The Tomb of the Pistolero*, a suspense story rather than the Western the title would imply; and *Las Garras de Lorelei*, a second witch epic.

De Ossorio's *The Sea Serpent* failed to garner much interest. Rather than resembling the de Ossorio brand of horror in even the most remote sense, this one instead imitates a Japanese giant monster flick. The end product, which suffers from poor production values, elicits few scares. Devoid of blood, *The Sea Serpent* is easily mistaken for a comedy simply because the actors attempt to take the plot seriously. In the end, director de Ossorio used an alias on the film.

Regarding the film's shortcomings, like the phony, cartoonish titular beastie, de Ossorio grumbles, "It's not a *bad* film, but it could have been better."

While one might expect de Ossorio to feel competitive toward other directors in his native Spain and Europe, he appears to hold no ill will toward anyone, and in fact freely praises Sergio Leone, Dario Argento, Juan Piquer and others, past and present.

The only negative comment de Ossorio offers is in regard to Jacinto Molina (a.k.a. Paul Naschy), one of the few Spanish horror directors more widely recognized than de Ossorio.

"I've followed Molina's career for years, since it tends to run parallel with mine," he smiles. "What I laugh at is some of the praise he receives as an actor, because there's a big point to make which is not known to most outsiders. Molina—or Naschy, whichever you want to call him—has always had difficulty projecting his voice. He always mumbles, and in the bulk of his movies, there has been someone respeaking his dialogue for him. When he received an award several years ago for his acting, those who knew this behind-the-scenes information were laughing aloud about it, because we realized the voice that captured so many people was dubbed. It became an inside joke in the profession."

Reverting to his precious Templars, de Ossorio comes alive as he envisions mayhem yet to come. "Molina has made a comeback lately with a film called *Howl of the Devil*. The more I think of it, the more I think it is time for me to make a comeback too, returning to the horror world. If I plan things out right, I may have some new films out soon. In *Howl of the Devil*, Molina returned playing multiple roles, including a werewolf, the role which made him famous in Spain, and the public seemed interested. This is a good sign, because it shows the audience is not just interested in new figures like Freddy Krueger and Jason, but remembers the older horror films, too. I feel it is high time to revive the Templars from their graves once again, maybe using the plot I've already lined out, with them causing terror on the ocean coast. Maybe it's time for me to bring them back." ✸

SANTA

(continued from page 30)

Jodo: I am trying. I want to make another film—

Argento: Don't say "horror film." This is not a horror film. Definitely. A horror film is different. Usually horror films are silly, right? Some of the public, the critics, hate horror films.

GZ: I don't share that mindset. To me, horror films are among the best films, so it's not a belittling term. It's the purest expression of the imagination.

Jodo: I know and love the horror film. *Evil Dead II*, did you see that? Fantastic! *Freddy [A Nightmare on Elm Street] 4*, *Street Trash.* Listen, I invited Claudio to see *The Dybbuk*, because myself, I have a feeling.

My feeling is, when you make *The Exorcist*, you're dealing with demons, with horror, with objection. But if you can make a horror picture where the monstrosities are moving by love, through love, it can be very, very artistic. It could be formidable. In *The Dybbuk*, when they make the incantations, the soul of the two persons are fighting. There's a big fight, and the couch and chairs move. Everything starts to make love! Every object makes love! It's an expression of love.

For me, *The Dybbuk* would be fantastic. I must convince Claudio, I would like one day—if not today—to make the film, but not in a Jewish way—*my* way. It would be fantastic! I don't know, I may prefer to do that before *Sons of El Topo.* Even *I* don't know. I want to make a horror picture like that, but I want to change the premise, where you are seeing the monstrosity, but you are *loving* that. Not by *evil*, by good. No one has really done something like that. I could do it! Fantastic.

I am trying to change, to reverse the meaning. I want to return to horror, but in a spiritual way. In the study of horror movies, I don't see this; they don't know they exist in a spiritual sense. They are! We are! You are! Through the madness, through the monster of the unconscious, through death...transcendence. If somebody could do that, it would be of great importance.

OHIO

(continued from page 48)

used in the ceremonies."

Then there's the gore. For a scene in which a group of people get their guts ripped out, Swelstad and crew went to a slaughterhouse with a shopping list. "We brought back actual cow and pig guts," he relates. "We just poured them all over the actors—intestines, livers, the works. It looks great, very authentic, and it's going to sicken people."

Though critics might be quick to label *Falling Angels* as just another of the many hokey "cult" films around, it's based on *fact.* "Five years ago, two badly mutilated bodies were found near a small town south of Columbus," informs Swelstad, finishing off his last bite of lunch. "Eventually, they arrested and convicted one guy. But there was also proof that a cult—the Athens cult, it's called—was operating in the area and could have committed those murders. In fact, there is a large open cult just 10 miles from Columbus, in Dublin. The quarries over there are the ones we filmed at. The cult there uses them, too."

Like Bookwalter, Swelstad has more movies ready to go once *Falling Angels* is completed. His favorite involves a murderer who has just been sentenced to death. "He turns to the jury," divulges Swelstad, "and tells them he knows where all of them live and that he'll be back for them."

Whether Ohio becomes a hotbed of horror like neighboring Pittsburgh remains to be seen. The movies produced here are modest in comparison with those of Romero and Russo, but for now video is a good starting point. And besides, as every GOREZONE reader knows, the video market is in desperate need of modest-but-successful horror films.

"So many of the horror films in the direct-to-video market are real lemons that it is very rare to find even a good film," Bookwalter concludes. "I hope the movies we do here in Akron for video will be the exceptions, rather than the rule." Swelstad no doubt concurs.

ESSAY

(continued from page 55)

conscious, capable storytellers—and even fewer true artists—are still working in the genre. Cronenberg, Romero, Lynch and maybe Barker (*Nightbreed* will tell, if it fulfills or transcends the promise of his only film to date, *Hellraiser*) are those that immediately come to mind. Meanwhile, the other practitioners (Craven, Hooper, Carpenter, Argento) have been erratic at best, while Brian De Palma has gone on to do his best work outside the genre. The promising new generation of directors—Frank Henenlotter, Buddy (*Combat Shock*) Giovanazzo, John (*Henry*) McNaughton, Stuart (*Re-Animator*) Gordon, Michele (*Stagefright*) Soavi and Jim (*Deadbeat at Dawn*) VanBebber—and the current crop of horror authors have yet to find an industry open to their talents and initial, impressive accomplishments. We can only hope.

Of course, this Cult of Personality (Chas. Balun's spot-on term) does not reflect the value of the truly gifted artists and storytellers. Forever trust the tale, not the teller. Damned few tales are being told at all of late.

Can the genre grow within—or beyond—the confines imposed by the opportunistic concerns of the merchandising moguls, timid studios, control-hungry video barons and the duplicity of the commercially sanctioned MPAA? Will the "safe splatter" and paint-by-number cartoons that pass for horror films give way to heartfelt, human nightmares with soul, substance and teeth? The American film industry is in a sorry state as we edge into the 1990s, but cinema is not simply an industry. It is an art form, too. The potential of the horror genre to plum the depths and illuminate the darker aspects of the human experience is as vital and valuable as ever, especially as we enter the 1990s.

Horror, if you will, is an emotion to be explored, not a commodity to be sold. Therein lies the hope—and the dilemma—of the horror film as we move into a new decade.

By DOUG DREXLER

CAGLIONE & DREXLER'S MAKEUP FX LAB

John & Doug's Bits & Pieces

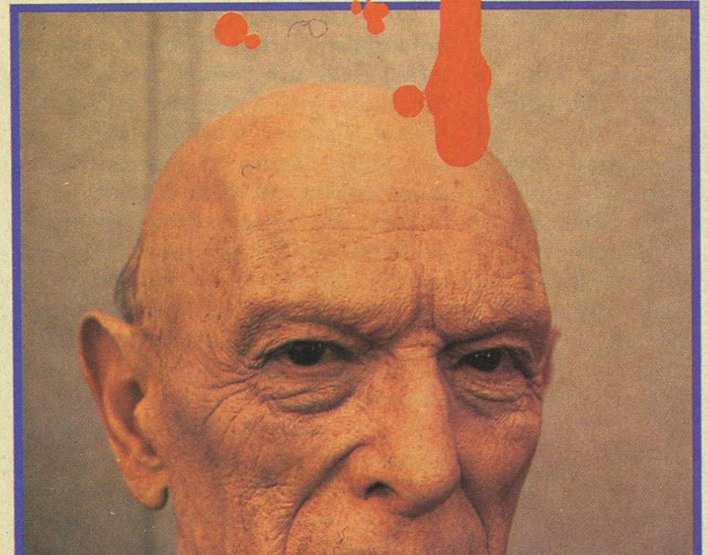
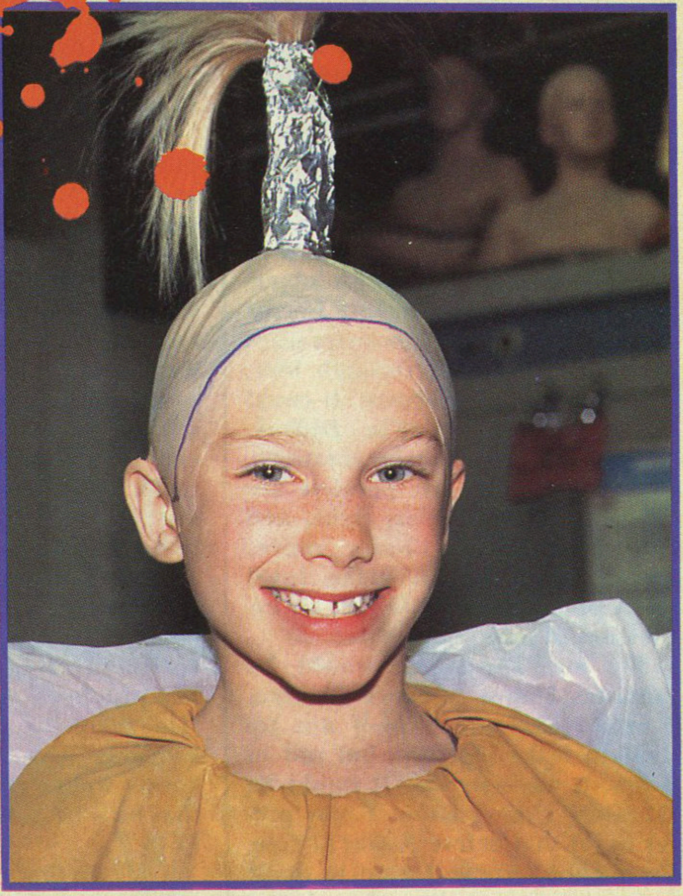


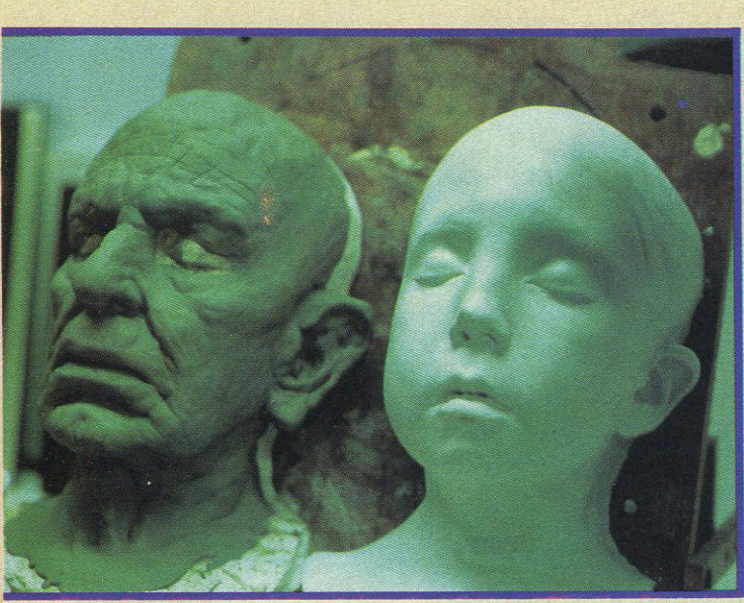
PHOTO 1: OK, let's look at one bitchin' makeup, dude! Way back in GOREZONE #2, we covered this makeup. It's actor Nate Davis with eight pieces of rubber blended into his face.

PHOTO 2: The director wanted us to make this cute little munchkin look like the made-up Nate Davis.


All Photos: Copyright 1990 Caglione & Drexler

Yow! This article is being written on the run. John and I are actually between films right now, but does that mean things are any slower? *No way*! Lemme 'splain: We are in the heavenly grip of a peculiar union rite known as day-checking! It is one of the many wonders associated with being a member of the Hollywood makeup union! Believe it or not, the union calls you on the telephone and asks you if you'd like to spend the day on the set of a motion picture or television program...and get *paid*! Hell no, I ain't kidding! So you see, even when we're on vacation, it's kind of hard to sit still! Dig? John and I are bouncing all over movietown, visiting such heavy makeup shows as *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and *Alien Nation*. It's really a dream come true for these two kids!

So listen up! The "technohead delight" promised last issue will appear next issue! It's gonna be a goodie and deserves not to be rushed. Next ish, *promise*. In the meantime, here's a little bit of everything to keep ya busy.



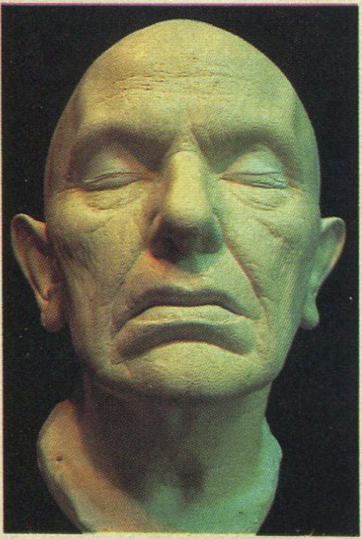
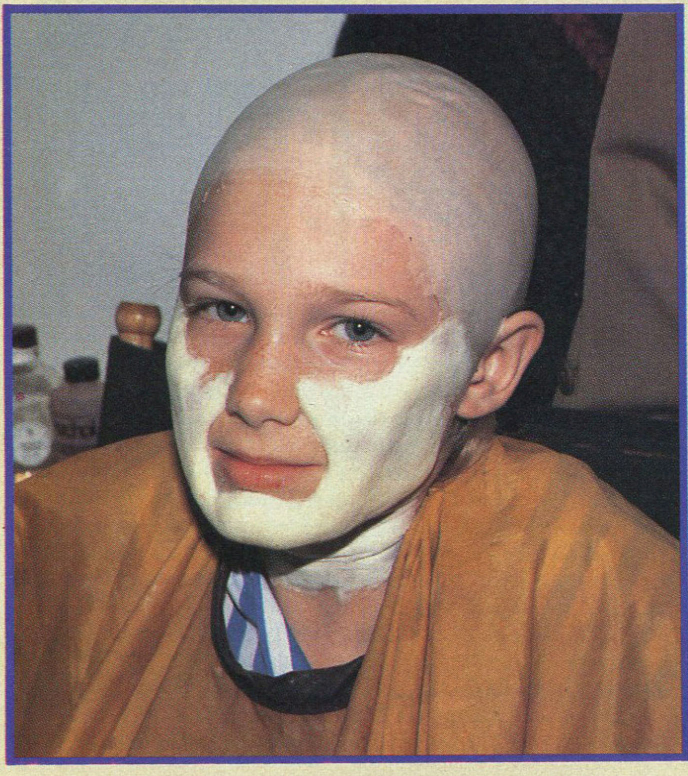
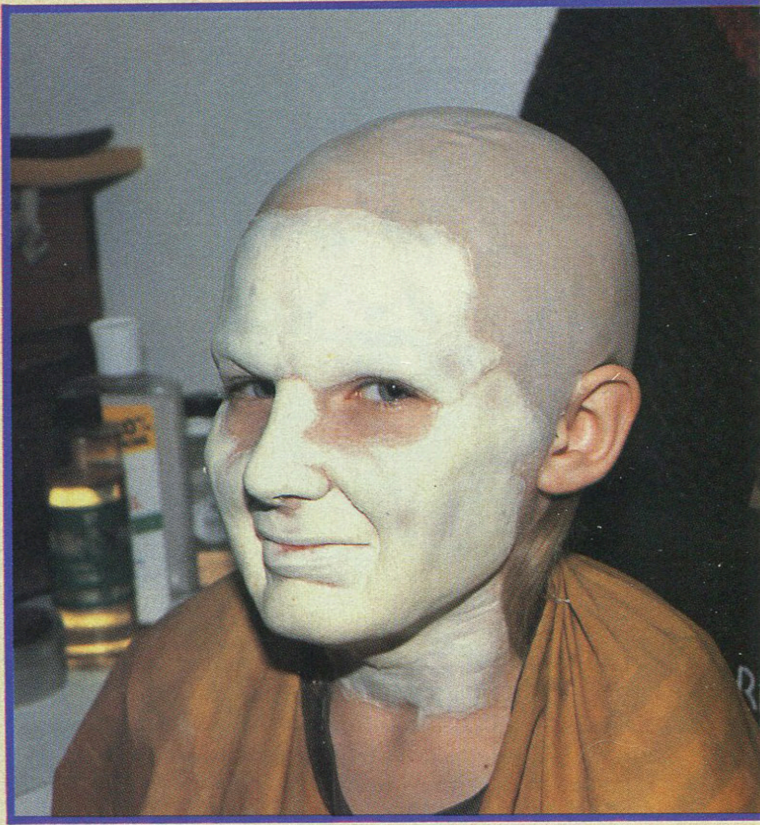


PHOTO 3: I did a sculpture of Nate on the little girl's lifemask as a preliminary sketch in order to check on the feasibility of the concept.

PHOTO 4: Here's Dick Smith's finished sculpture of the makeup. From here we "float" the clay and throw some molds. Next we wrestle the foam latex beastie, who bribes us with some incredible appliances to which we cannot say no.

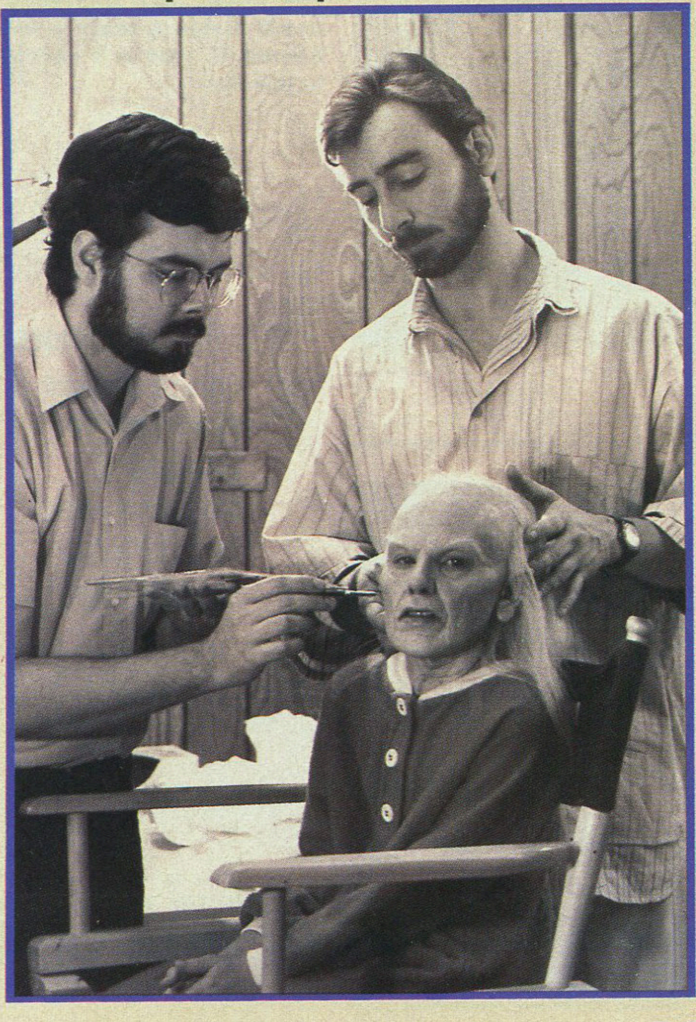
PHOTO 5: Next, it's on to the set! Stephan and Kevin begin application. The wrap is secure...





...forehead, nose, upper and lower lip...

...and the completed makeup!



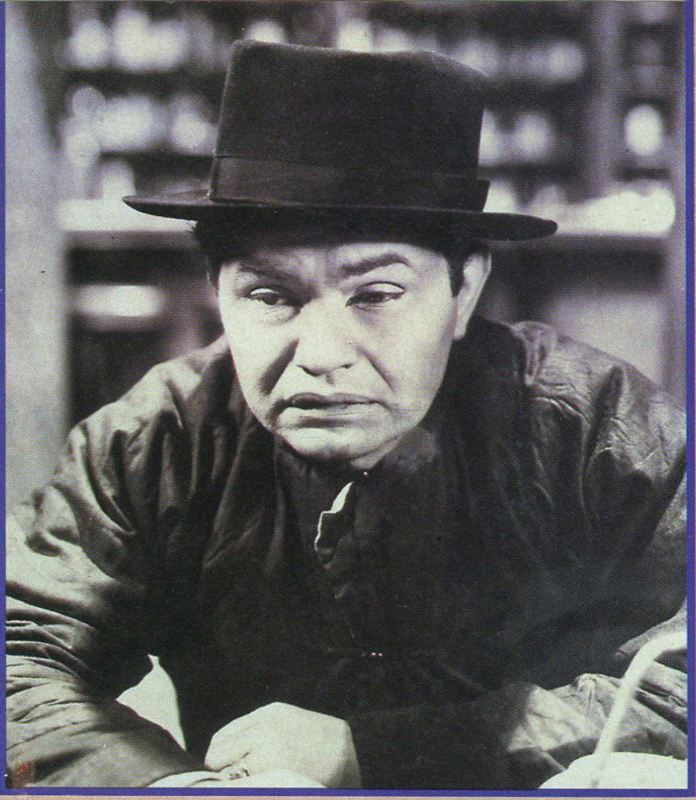


PHOTO 8: Here is a brilliant character makeup, a blast from the past! Edward G. Robinson is cast to play Erlich in the film story of *Dr. Erlich's Magic Bullet*.

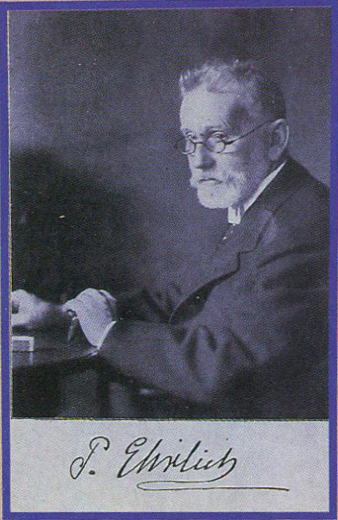


PHOTO 9: Here's a morgue photo of the real Dr. Erlich. The great Perc Westmore would design a makeup for Edward G. that is a classic to this day.

Perc Westmore would design a makeup for Edward G. Robinson that is a classic to this day.

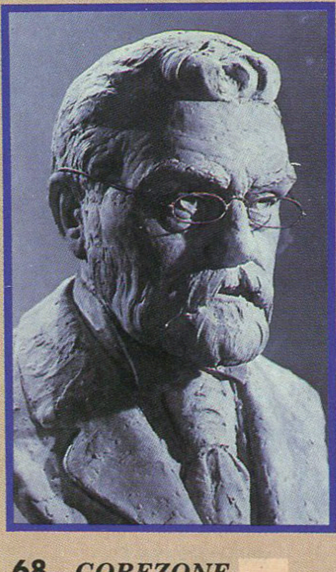


PHOTO 10: Under Perc's guidance, a bust of Robinson as Dr. Erlich is sculpted.

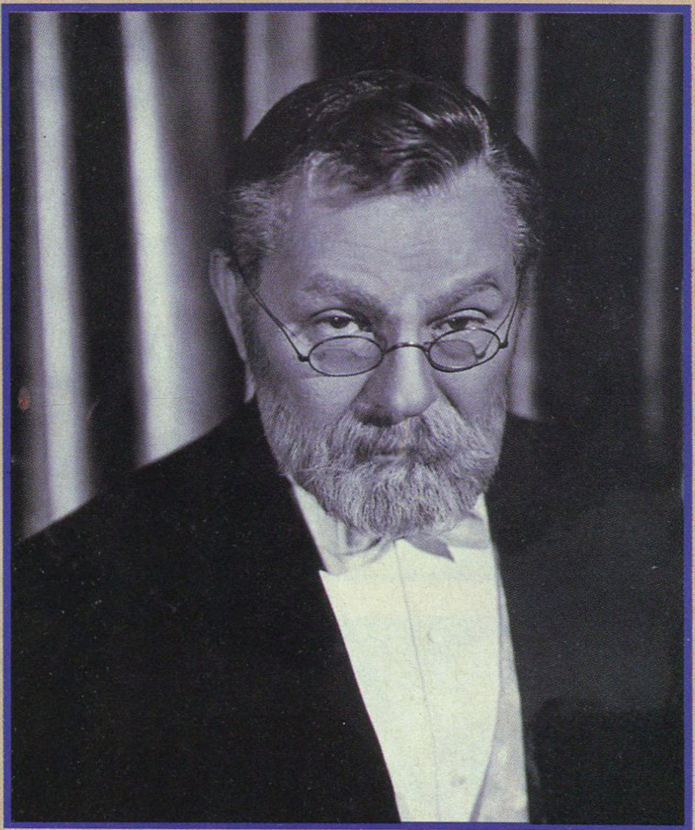
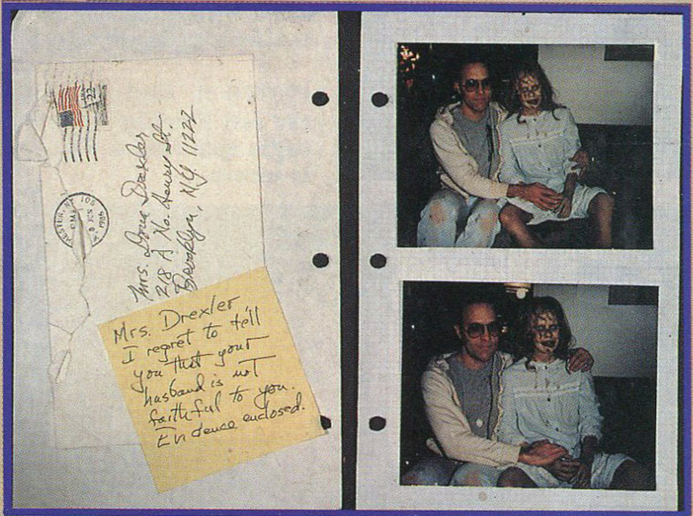


PHOTO 11: The finished design, applied by Clay Campbell. That beard was hand-laid every day, a hair at a time, directly on the actor's face! *Incredible*!



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Mrs. Drexler
I regret to tell
you that your
husband is not
faithful to you.
Evidence enclosed.

PHOTO 12: In closing, I wanted to share this funny letter that turned up in my mailbox not too long ago. I spent some time up at Dick Smith's, helping to assemble and pack the Linda Blair dummy when the Smithsonian was planning a traveling show celebrating Hollywood. The famous museum contacted Dick, and the horrifically possessed little girl joined the exhibit. Just before packing Linda away, Dick snapped a few shots of the old girl and me holding hands. About a week later, an envelope with no return address arrived at my home. In case the reproduction of the photo isn't too swift, I'll read the note that accompanied the now incriminating pictures: "Dear Mrs. Drexler: I regret to tell you that your husband is unfaithful to you. Evidence enclosed."

My friends, John and I have gotta run! Next time, it's *Return to the Planet of Basic Moldmaking*! Aloha!

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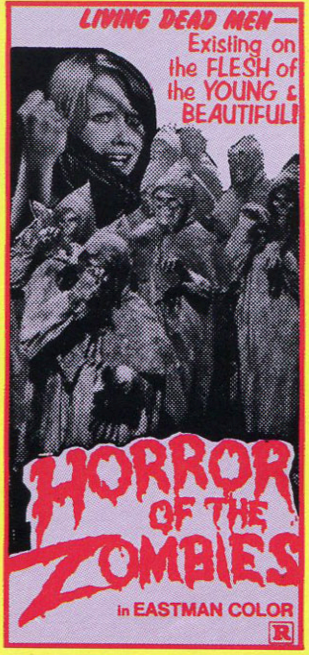

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FUTURE SHOCK

Did you know that nine out of 10 newsstand magazines don't survive their first year of publication? Kinda makes you proud to be a GoreZonian, doesn't it? Two years later, the little mag with the big attitude is still merrily smirching periodical racks across the land.

Weirdest of all, GOREZONE has its own following now, and lotsa folks claim they like GZ *better* than Fango. This we never expected. On top of that, GOREZONE actually gets press in some places where Fango doesn't. We've gotten letters from readers saying, "You're so much better than those Fango dorks." It's enough to give us split personalities.

Here's a tangible manner in which you can contribute to GZ. Do you notice that slogan in the Z of GOREZONE on the cover? We have to come up with a new phrase every issue, and we're always open to suggestions. Publisher Norm Jacobs loves last issue's "The magazine that oozes!", while Editor Timpone prefers the similar "The magazine that BLEEDS!" from GZ #9. Managing Editor Orr looks back with fondness on "Movies with guts!" from our second ish. So if you're thus inclined, why not include your ideas for future Z lines when you send us a letter or artwork? If we use it, we'll thank you somewhere in the mag. (For your information, "The MPAA sucks!" has been vetoed several times already, so save your stamp.)

Well, thank you all for another awesome year. In the months to come, we'll talk with Dario Argento about his collaboration with George Romero on TWO EVIL EYES, interview producer/director Brian Yuzna on THE BRIDE OF RE-ANIMATOR, and listen to director John Harrison regarding TALES FROM THE DARKSIDE: THE MOVIE. You won't want to miss a single saucy issue (unless you're a wimp, of course). Get set to sink your teeth into GOREZONE #14.

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Nightmares

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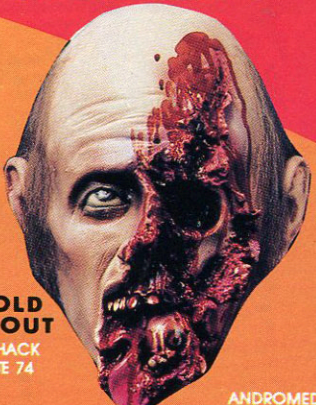
TE 89



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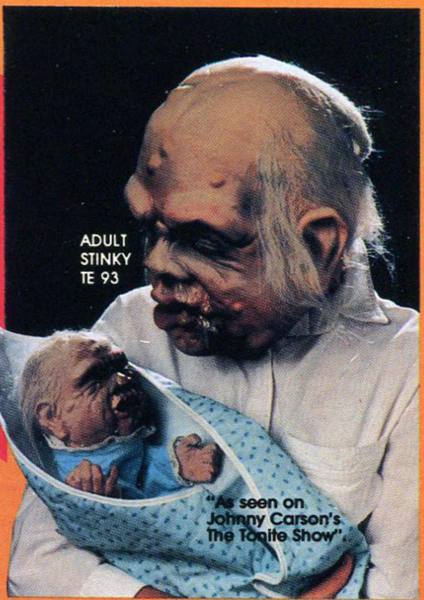

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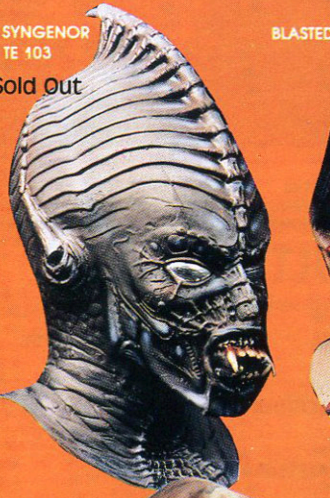

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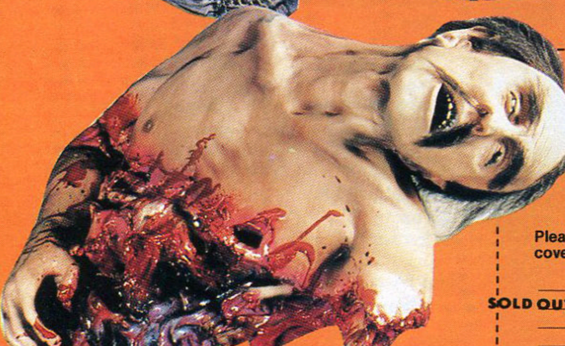

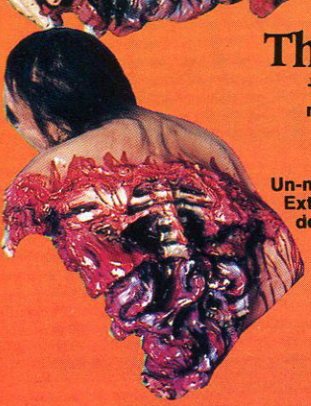

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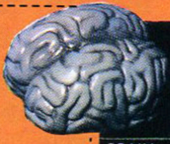

BRAIN
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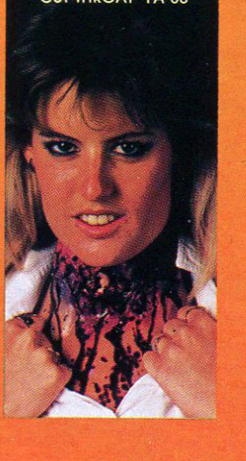

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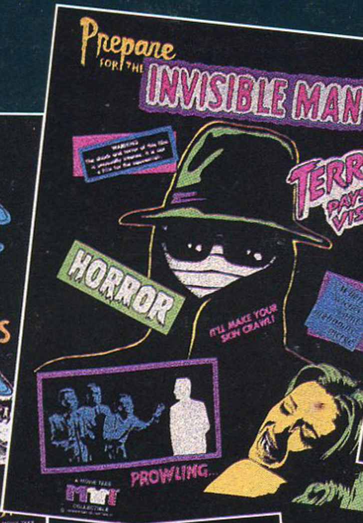
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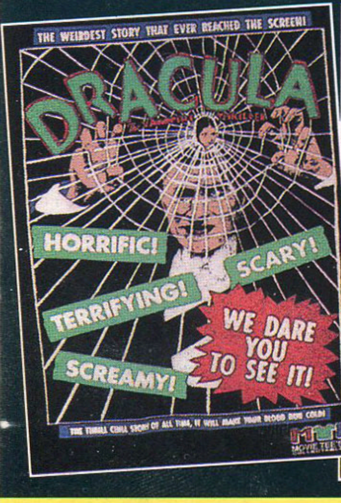
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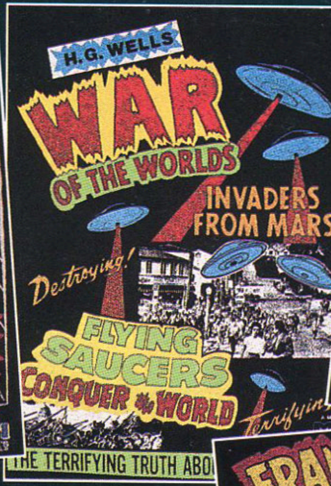
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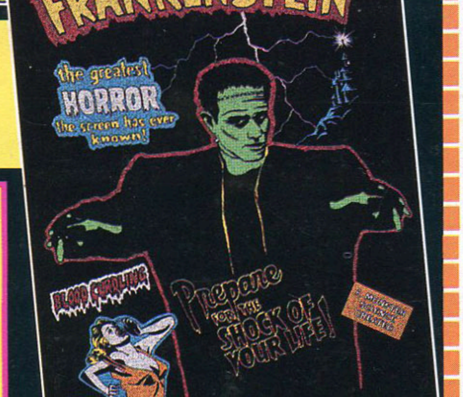
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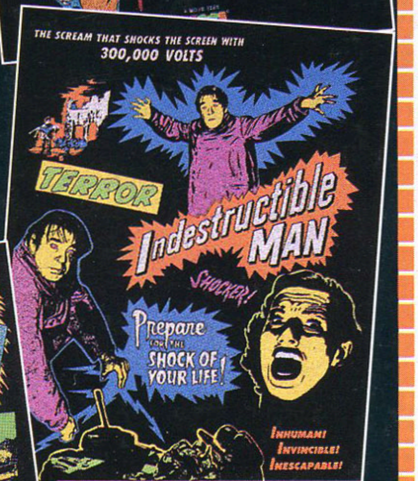
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Indestructible MAN
SHOCKER!
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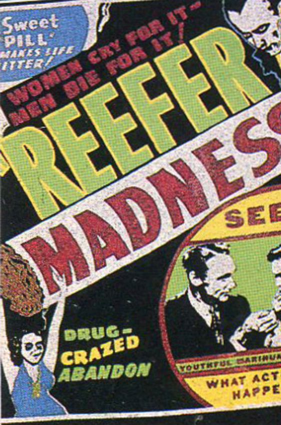
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INVISIBLE MAN
Tee _
Sweat _

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Sweat _
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